

PLEASURES of IMAGINATION



*till opening wide
its lucid orb a more than human form
emerging beauteous majestic o'er my head.*

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THE
PLEASURES
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OF
IMAGINATION:
A POEM.

IN THREE BOOKS.

By MARK AKENSIDE, M.D.

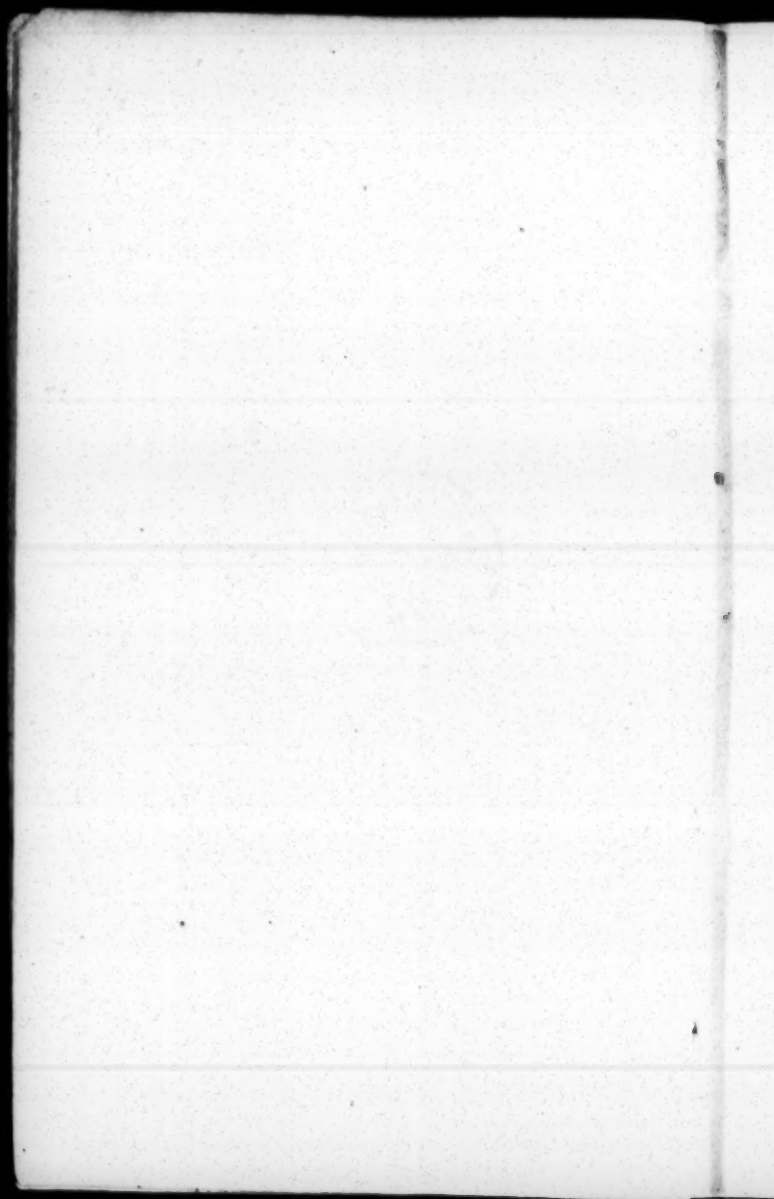
Ἄσπετος μὲν ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος τὰς παρὰ τῷ θεῷ χάριτας
ἀτιμάζειν.
EPICT. apud Arrian. II. 23.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
INSCRIPTIONS.

By the SAME AUTHOR.

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M DCC LXXXVI.



THE DESIGN.

THERE are certain powers in human nature which seem to hold a middle place between the organs of bodily sense and the faculties of moral perception : they have been called by a very general name "The Powers of Imagination." Like the external senses they relate to matter and motion, and at the same time give the mind ideas analogous to those of moral approbation and dislike. As they are the inlets of some of the most exquisite Pleasures with which we are acquainted, it has naturally happened that men of warm and sensible tempers have sought means to recal the delightful perceptions which they afford, independent of the objects which originally produced them. This gave rise to the imitative or designing arts, some of which, as painting and sculpture, directly copy the external appearances which were admired in Nature ; others, as musick and poetry, bring them back to remembrance by signs universally established and understood.

But these arts, as they grew more correct and deliberate, were, of course, led to extend their imitation beyond the peculiar objects of the imaginative powers, especially poetry, which making use of language as the instrument by which it imitates, is consequently become an unlimited representative of every species and mode of being ; yet as their intention was only to express the objects of Imagination, and as they still abound chiefly in ideas of that class, they of course retain their original character, and all the different

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Pleasures which they excite are termed in general Pleasures of Imagination.

The Design of the following Poem is to give a view of these in the largest acceptation of the term, so that whatever our Imagination feels from the agreeable appearances of nature, and all the various entertainments we meet with either in poetry, painting, musick, or any of the elegant arts, might be deducible from one or other of those principles in the constitution of the human mind which are here established and explained.

In executing this general plan it was necessary first of all to distinguish the Imagination from our other faculties, and in the next place to characterize those original forms or properties of being about which it is conversant, and which are by nature adapted to it, as light is to the eyes, or truth to the understanding. These properties Mr. Addison had reduced to the three general classes of Greatness, Novelty, and Beauty; and into these we may analyze every object, however complex, which, properly speaking, is delightful to the Imagination. But such an object may also include many other sources of Pleasure, and its beauty, or novelty, or grandeur, will make a stronger impression by reason of this concurrence. Besides which the imitative arts, especially poetry, owe much of their effect to a similar exhibition of properties quite foreign to the imagination, inasmuch that in every line of the most applauded poems we meet with either ideas drawn from the external senses, or

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truths discovered to the understanding, or illustrations of contrivance and final causes, or, above all the rest, with circumstances proper to awaken and engage the passions; it was therefore necessary to enumerate and exemplify these different species of Pleasure, especially that from the passions, which as it is supreme in the noblest work of human genius, so being in some particulars not a little surprising, gave an opportunity to enliven the didactic turn of the poem, by introducing an allegory to account for the appearance.

After these parts of the subject which hold chiefly of admiration, or naturally warm and interest the mind, a Pleasure of a very different nature, that which arises from Ridicule, came next to be considered. As this is the foundation of the comick manner in all the arts, and has been but very imperfectly treated by moral writers, it was thought proper to give it a particular illustration, and to distinguish the general sources from which the ridicule of characters is derived. Here too a change of style became necessary, such a one as might yet be consistent, if possible, with the general taste of composition in the serious parts of the subject; nor is it an easy task to give any tolerable force to images of this kind without running either into the gigantick expressions of the mock heroick, or the familiar and poetical raillery of professed satire, neither of which would have been proper here.

The materials of all imitation being thus laid open, nothing now remained but to illustrate some parti-

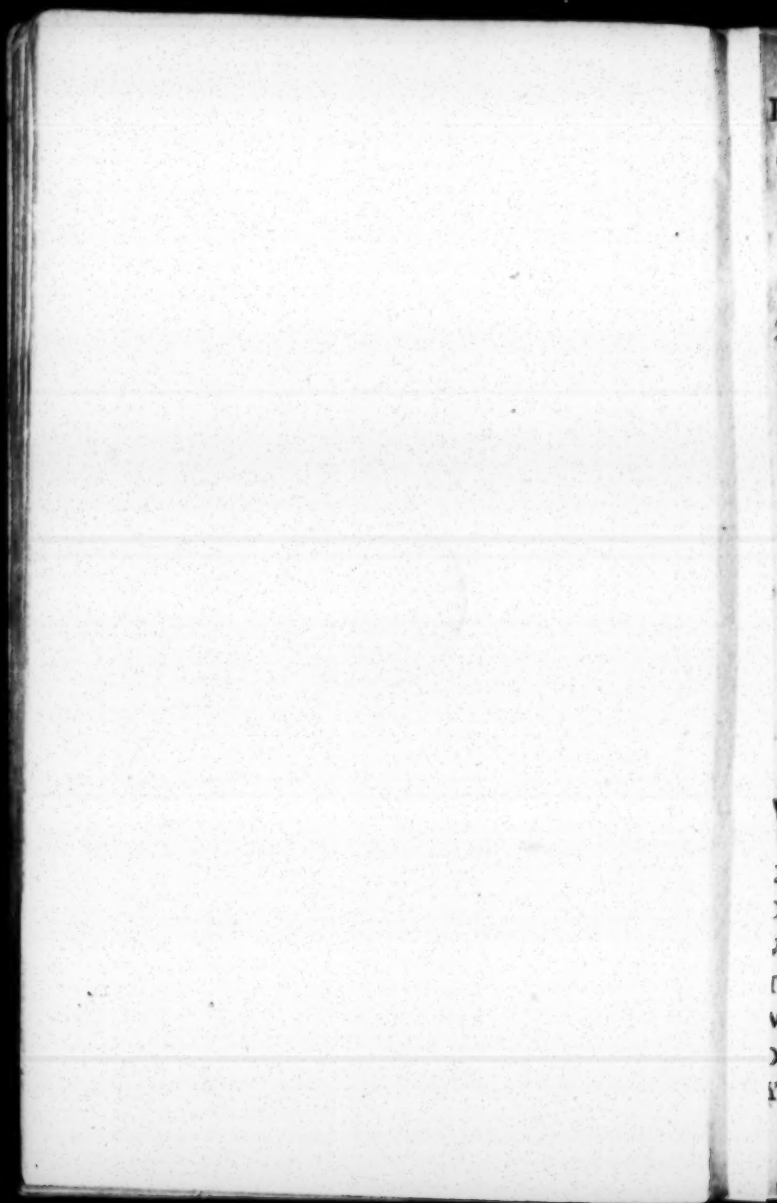
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cular Pleasures which arise either from the relations of different objects one to another, or from the nature of imitation itself. Of the first kind is that various and complicated resemblance existing between several parts of the material and immaterial worlds, which is the foundation of metaphor and wit. As it seems in a great measure to depend on the early association of our ideas, and as this habit of associating is the source of many Pleasures and pains in life, and on that account bears a great share in the influence of poetry and the other arts, it is therefore mentioned here, and its effects described: then follows a general account of the production of these elegant arts, and of the secondary pleasure, as it is called, arising from the resemblance of their imitations to the original appearances of nature: after which the work concludes with some reflections on the general conduct of the powers of Imagination, and on their natural and moral usefulness in life.

Concerning the manner or turn of composition which prevails in this piece, little can be said with propriety by the Author. He had two models; that ancient and simple one of the first Grecian poets, as it is refined by Virgil in the Georgicks, and the familiar epistolary way of Horace. This latter has several advantages: it admits of a greater variety of style; it more readily engages the generality of readers, as partaking more of the air of conversation, and especially with the assistance of rhyme leads to a closer and

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more concise expression. Add to this the example of the most perfect of modern poets, who has so happily applied this manner to the noblest parts of philosophy that the publick taste is in a great manner formed to it alone. Yet, after all, the subject before us, tending almost constantly to admiration and enthusiasm, seemed rather to demand a more open, pathetick, and figured style. This too appeared more natural, as the Author's aim was not so much to give formal precepts, or enter into the way of direct argumentation, as by exhibiting the most engaging prospects of nature to enlarge and harmonize the Imagination, and by that means insensibly dispose the minds of men to a similar taste and habit of thinking in religion, morals, and civil life. It is on this account that he is so careful to point out the benevolent intention of the Author of Nature in every principle of the human constitution here insisted on, and also to unite the moral excellencies of life in the same point of view with the mere external objects of good taste ; thus recommending them in common to our natural propensity for admiring what is beautiful and lovely. The same views have also led him to introduce some sentiments which may perhaps be looked upon as not quite direct to the subject ; but since they bear an obvious relation to it, the authority of Virgil, the faultless model of didactick poetry, will best support him in this particular : for the sentiments themselves he makes no apology.



T H E PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

Ἀρετὴς μὲν ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπου τὰς παρὰ τῆ θεῆ χάριτας
ἀπολαύειν. EPICT. apud Arrian. II. 23.

B O O K I.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

THE subject proposed: difficulty of treating it poetically. The ideas of the Divine Mind the origin of every quality pleasing to the Imagination. The natural variety of constitution in the minds of men, with its final cause. The idea of a fine imagination, and the state of the mind in the enjoyment of those Pleasures which it affords. All the primary Pleasures of the Imagination result from the perception of greatness, or wonderfulness, or beauty, in objects. The Pleasure from greatness, with its final cause: Pleasure from novelty or wonderfulness, with its final cause: Pleasure from beauty, with its final cause. The connexion of beauty with truth and good, applied to the conduct of life. Invitation to the study of moral philosophy. The different degrees of beauty in different species of objects; colour, shape, natural concretes, vegetables, animals; the mind. The sublime, the fair, the wonderful, of the mind. The connexion of the Imagination and the moral faculty. Conclusion.

W ITH what attractive charms this goodly frame
 Of Nature touches the consenting hearts
 Of mortal men, and what the pleasing stores
 Which beauteous imitation thence derives
 To deck the poet's or the painter's toil, 5
 My Verse unfolds. Attend, ye gentle Pow'rs
 Of Musical delight! and while I sing
 Your gifts, your honours, dance around my strain.

Thou, smiling queen of ev'ry tuneful breast,
 Indulgent Fancy! from the fruitful banks
 Of Avon, whence thy rosy fingers cull
 Fresh flow'rs and dew's to sprinkle on the turf
 Where Shakespeare lies, be present; and with thee
 Let Fiction come, upon her fragrant wings
 Wasting ten thousand colours through the air,
 Which, by the glances of her magic, she
 She blends and shifts at will thro' countless forms,
 Her wild creation. Goddess of the Lyre,
 Which rules the accents of the moving sphere,
 Wilt thou, eternal Harmony! descend
 And join this festive train? for with thee comes
 The guide, the guardian of their lovely sports,
 Majestick Truth! and where Truth deigns to come
 Her sister, Liberty, will not be far.
 Be present, all ye Genii! who conduct
 The wand'ring footsteps of the youthful bard
 New to your springs and shades, who touch his ear
 With finer sounds, who heighten to his eye
 The bloom of Nature, and before him turn
 The gayest, happiest, attitude of things.

OFT have the laws of each poetic strain
 The critick verse employ'd; yet still unsung
 Lay this prime subject, tho' importing most
 A Poet's name: for fruitless is th' attempt
 By dull obedience and by creeping toil
 Obscure to conquer the severe ascent
 Of high Parnassus. Nature's kindling breath
 Must fire the chosen genius; Nature's Land

Must string his nerves, and imp his eagle wings,
Impatient of the painful steep, to soar 40
High as the summit, there to breathe at large
Ethereal air with bards and sages old,
Immortal sons of praise! These flatt'ring scenes
To this neglected labour court my song;
Yet not unconscious what a doubtful task 45
To paint the finest features of the mind,
And to most subtle and mysterious things
Give colour, strength, and motion. But the love
Of Nature and the Muses bids explore,
Thro' secret paths erewhile untrod by man, 50
The fair poetic region, to detect
Untasted springs, to drink inspiring draughts,
And shade my temples with unfading flow'rs,
Cull'd from the laureate vale's profound recess,
Where never poet gain'd a wreath before. 55
From Heav'n my strains begin; from Heav'n de-
The flame of genius to the human breast, [scends
And love, and beauty, and poetic joy;
And inspiration. Ere the radiant sun
Sprang from the east, or 'mid the vault of night 60
The moon suspended her serener lamp,
Ere mountains, woods, or streams, adorn'd the globe,
Or Wisdom taught the sons of men her lore,
Then liv'd th' Almighty One; then deep-retir'd
In his unfathom'd essence view'd the forms, 65
The forms eternal, of created things;
The radiant sun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,
The mountains, woods, and streams, the rolling globe,

And Wisdom's mien celestial. From the first
 Of days on them his love divine he fix'd, 70
 His admiration, till in time complete
 What he admir'd and lov'd his vital smile
 Unfolded into being. Hence the breath
 Of life informing each organick frame, 74
 Hence the green earth and wild resounding waves,
 Hence light and shade alternate, warmth and cold,
 And clear autumnal skies and vernal snow's,
 And all the fair variety of things.

But not alike to ev'ry mortal eye
 Is this great scene unveil'd; for since the claims 80
 Of social life to diff'rent labours urge
 The active pow'rs of man, with wise intent
 The hand of Nature on peculiar minds
 Imprints a diff'rent bias, and to each
 Decrees its province in the common toil. 85
 To some she taught the fabrick of the sphere,
 The changeful moon, the circuit of the stars,
 The golden zones of heav'n: to some she gave
 To weigh the moment of eternal things,
 Of time, and space, and Fate's unbroken chain, 90
 And will's quick impulse: others by the hand
 She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore
 What healing virtue swells the tender veins
 Of herbs and flow'rs, or what the beams of morn
 Draw forth, distilling from the clifted rind 95
 In balmy tears. But some to higher hopes

Were destin'd ; some within a finer mould
 She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame :
 To these the Sire Omnipotent unfolds
 The world's harmonious volume, there to read 100
 The transcript of himself. On ev'ry part
 They trace the bright impressions of his hand :
 In earth or air, the meadow's purple stores,
 The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's form,
 Blooming with rosy smiles, they see portray'd 105
 That uncreated beauty which delights
 The mind supreme : they also feel her charms
 Enamour'd : they partake th' eternal joy.

For as old Memnon's image, long renown'd
 By fabling Nilus, to the quiv'ring touch 110
 Of Titan's ray with each repulsive string
 Consenting, founded thro' the warbling air
 Unbidden strains ; ev'n so did Nature's hand
 To certain species of external things
 Attune the finer organs of the mind : 115
 So the glad impulse of congenial pow'rs,
 Or of sweet sound or fair proportion'd form,
 The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
 Thrills thro' imagination's tender frame
 From nerve to nerve : all naked and alive 120
 They catch the spreading rays, till now the soul
 At length discloses ev'ry tuneful spring,
 To that harmonious movement from without
 Responsive. Then the inexpressive strain

Diffuses its enchantment ; Fancy dreams 125
 Of sacred fountains, and Elysian groves,
 And vales of bliss : the intellectual pow'r
 Bends from his awful throne a wond'ring ear,
 And smiles : the passions, gently sooth'd away,
 Sink to divine repose, and love and joy 130
 Alone are waking ; love and joy serene
 As airs that fan the summer. O ! attend,
 Whoe'er thou art whom these delights can touch,
 Whose candid bosom the refining love
 Of Nature warms ; O ! listen to my song, 135
 And I will guide thee to her fav'rite walks,
 And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,
 And point her loveliest features to thy view.

Know then, whate'er of Nature's pregnant stores,
 Whate'er of mimic Art's reflected forms, 140
 With love and admiration thus inflame
 The pow'rs of fancy, her delighted sons
 To three illustrious orders have referr'd,
 Three sister Graces whom the painter's hand,
 The poet's tongue, confesses ; the Sublime, 145
 The Wonderful, the Fair. I see them dawn !
 I see the radiant visions where they rise,
 More lovely than when Lucifer displays
 His beaming forehead thro' the gates of morn
 To lead the train of Phœbus and the spring. 150
 Say, why was man so eminently rais'd

Ver. 151. *Say, why was man, &c.*] In apologizing for
 the frequent negligences of the sublimest authors of

Amid the vast creation? why ordain'd
 Thro' life and death to dart his piercing eye,
 With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame,
 But that th' Omnipotent might send him forth, 155
 In sight of mortal and immortal pow'rs,
 As on a boundless theatre, to run
 The great career of justice, to exalt
 His gen'rous aim to all diviner deeds,
 To chase each partial purpose from his breast, 160
 And thro' the mists of passion and of sense,
 And thro' the tossing tide of chance and pain,
 To hold his course unfaltering, while the voice
 Of Truth and Virtue up the steep ascent

Greece, "Those godlike geniuses," says Longinus,
 "were well assured that Nature had not intended
 "man for a low-spirited or ignoble being, but bring-
 "ing us into life and the midst of this wide universe,
 "as before a multitude assembled at some heroick so-
 "lemnity, that we might be spectators of all her mag-
 "nificence, and candidates high in emulation for the
 "prize of glory; she has therefore implanted in our
 "souls an inextinguishable love of every thing great
 "and exalted, of every thing which appears divine be-
 "yond our comprehension: whence it comes to pass
 "that even the whole world is not an object sufficient
 "for the depth and rapidity of human Imagination,
 "which often sallies forth beyond the limits of all that
 "surrounds us. Let any man cast his eye through the
 "whole circle of our existence, and consider how es-
 "pecially it abounds in excellent and grand objects,
 "he will soon acknowledge for what enjoyments and
 "pursuits we were destined. Thus by the very propen-
 "sity of Nature, we are led to admire not little springs
 "or shallow rivulets, however clear and delicious,
 "but the Nile, the Rhine, the Danube, and, much
 "more than all, the ocean," &c. *Dionys. Longin. de*
Sublim. sect. xxiv.

Of Nature calls him to his high reward, 165
 Th' applauding smile of Heav'n ? else wherefore burns
 In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope
 That breathes from day to day sublimer things,
 And mocks possession ? wherefore darts the mind
 With such resistless ardour to embrace 170
 Majestick forms, impatient to be free
 Spurning the gross controul of wilful might,
 Proud of the strong contention of her toils,
 Proud to be daring ? Who but rather turns
 To heav'n's broad fire his unconstrained view 175
 Than to the glimm'ring of a waxen flame ?
 Who that from Alpine heights his lab'ring eye
 Shoots round the wide horizon to survey
 Nilus or Ganges rolling his bright wave
 Thro' mountains, plains, thro' empires black with shade
 And continents of sand, will turn his gaze 181
 To mark the windings of a scanty rill
 That murmurs at his feet ? The high-born soul
 Disdains to rest her heav'n-aspiring wing
 Beneath its native quarry. Tir'd of earth 185
 And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft
 Thro' fields of air, pursues the flying storm,
 Rides on the volly'd lightning thro' the heav'ns,
 Or yok'd with whirlwinds and the northern blast
 Sweeps the long track of day. Then high she soars
 The blue profound, and hov'ring round the Sun 191
 Beholds him pouring the redundant stream

Of light, beholds his unrelenting sway
 Bend the reluctant planets to absolve
 The fated rounds of time : thence far effus'd 195
 She darts her swiftness up the long career
 Of devious comets, thro' its burning signs
 Exulting measures the perennial wheel
 Of Nature, and looks back on all the stars,
 Whose blended light as with a milky zone 200
 Invest the orient. Now amaz'd she views
 The empyreal waste, where happy spirits hold
 Beyond this concave heav'n their calm abode,
 And fields of radiance, whose unfading light
 Has travell'd the profound fix thousand years, 205
 Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things.
 Ev'n on the barriers of the world untir'd
 She meditates th' eternal depth below,
 'Till half recoiling down the headlong steep
 She plunges, soon o'erwhelm'd and swallow'd up 210

Ver. 202. *The empyreal waste, &c.*] “ Ne se peut-il point
 “ qu'il y a un grand espace au dela de la region des
 “ etoiles? Que se soit le ciel empyree, ou non, tou-
 “ jours cet espace immense qui environne toute cette
 “ region, pourra etre rempli de bonheur et de gloire.
 “ Il pourra etre conçu comme l'ocean, ou se rendent
 “ les fleuves de toutes les creatures bienheureuses,
 “ quand elles seront venues a leur perfection dans le
 “ systeme des etoiles.” *Leibnitz dans la Theodicee,*
 “ part I. sect. 19.

Ver. 204.—*whose unfading light, &c.*] It was a no-
 tion of the great Mr. Huygens, that there may be fixed
 stars at such a distance from our solar system as that
 their light should not have had time to reach us even
 from the creation of the world to this day.

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In that immense of being. There her hopes
 Rest at the fated goal : for from the birth
 Of mortal man the Sov'reign Maker said;
 That not in humble, not in brief delight,
 Not in the fading echoes of renown, 215
 Pow'r's purple robes nor Pleasure's flow'ry lap,
 The soul should find enjoyment ; but from these
 Turning disdainful to an equal good
 Thro' all th' ascent of things enlarge her view,
 'Till ev'ry bound at length should disappear, 220
 And infinite perfection close the scene.

Call now to mind what high capacious pow'rs
 Lie folded up in man ; how far beyond
 The praise of mortals may th' eternal growth
 Of Nature to perfection half divine 225
 Expand the blooming soul : what pity then
 Should sloth's unkindly fogs depress to earth
 Her tender blossom, choke the streams of life,
 And blast her spring ! Far otherwise design'd
 Almighty Wisdom : Nature's happy cares 230
 Th' obedient heart far otherwise incline ;
 Witness the sprightly joy when aught unknown
 Strikes the quick sense, and wakes each active pow'r
 To brisker measures ; witness the neglect
 Of all familiar prospects, tho' beheld 235

Ver. 234. — *the neglect — Of all familiar prospects, &c.*] It is here said that in consequence of the love of novelty, objects which at first were highly delightful to the mind lose that effect by repeated attention to them ; but the instance of habit is opposed to this observation, for there objects at first distasteful are in time rendered entirely agreeable by repeated attention.

With transport once, the fond attentive gaze
Of young Astonishment, the sober zeal
Of Age commenting on prodigious things.

The difficulty in this case will be removed, if we consider that, when objects at first agreeable lose that influence by frequently recurring, the mind is wholly passive, and the perception involuntary ; but habit on the other hand generally supposes choice and activity accompanying it ; so that the pleasure arises here not from the object but from the mind's conscious determination of its own activity, and consequently increases in proportion to the frequency of that determination.

It will still be urged perhaps that a familiarity with disagreeable objects renders them at length acceptable, even when there is no room for the mind to resolve or act at all : in this case the appearance must be accounted for one of these ways :

The pleasure from habit may be merely negative. The object at first gave uneasiness ; this uneasiness gradually wears off as the object grows familiar ; and the mind, finding it at last entirely removed, reckons its situation really pleasurable compared with what it had experienced before.

The dislike conceived of the object at first might be owing to prejudice or want of attention ; consequently the mind being necessitated to review it often, may at length perceive its own mistake, and be reconciled to what it had looked on with aversion ; in which case a sort of instinctive justice naturally leads it to make amends for the injury by running toward the other extreme of fondness and attachment.

Or, lastly, though the object itself should always continue disagreeable, yet circumstances of pleasure or good fortune may occur along with it : thus an association may arise in the mind, and the object never be remembered without those pleasing circumstances attending it, by which means the disagreeable impression which it at first occasioned will, in time, be quite obliterated.

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For such the bounteous providence of Heav'n,
 In ev'ry breast implanting this desire 240
 Of objects new and strange, to urge us on
 With unremitted labour to pursue
 Those sacred stores that wait the ripening soul
 In Truth's exhaustless bosom. What need words
 To paint its pow'r? For this the daring youth 245
 Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms
 In foreign climes to rove; the pensive sage,
 Heedless of sleep or midnight's harmful damp,
 Hangs o'er the sickly taper; and untir'd
 The virgin follows, with enchanted step, 250
 The mazes of some wild and wond'rous tale
 From morn to eve, unmindful of her form,
 Unmindful of the happy drest that stole
 The wishes of the youth when ev'ry maid
 With envy pin'd. Hence, finally, by night 255
 The village matron round the blazing hearth
 Suspends the infant audience with her tales,
 Breathing astonishment! of witching rhymes
 And evil spirits, of the death-bed call

Ver. 240.—*this desire—Of objects new and strange, &c.* These two ideas are often confounded, though it is evident the mere novelty of an object makes it agreeable, even where the mind is not affected with the least degree of wonder; whereas wonder indeed always implies novelty, being never excited by common or well-known appearances. But the pleasure in both cases is explicable from the same final cause, the acquisition of knowledge and enlargement of our views of Nature: on this account it is natural to treat of them together,

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Of him who robb'd the widow and devour'd 260

The orphan's portion, of unquiet souls

Ris'n from the grave to ease the heavy guilt

Of deeds in life conceal'd, of shapes that walk

At dead of night and clank their chains, and wave

The torch of hell around the murd'rer's bed : 265

At ev'ry solemn pause the crowd recoil,

Gazing each other speechless, and congeal'd

With shiv'ring sighs till, eager for th' event,

Around the beldame all erect they hang,

Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd.

But lo ! disclos'd in all her smiling pomp, 271

Where Beauty onward moving claims the verse

Her charms inspire : the freely flowing verse

In thy immortal praise, O form divine !

Smooths her mellifluous stream. Thee Beauty ! thee

The regal dome and thy enliv'ning ray 276

The mossy roofs adore : thou, better sun !

For ever beamest on th' enchanted heart

Love, and harmonious wonder, and delight

Poetic. Brightest progeny of Heav'n ! 280

How shall I trace thy features ? where select

The roseate hues to emulate thy bloom ?

Haste then, my Song ! thro' Nature's wide expanse,

Haste then, and gather all her comeliest wealth,

Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains, 285

Whate'er the waters or the liquid air,

To deck thy lovely labour. Wilt thou fly

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With laughing Autumn to th' Atlantic isles,
 And range with him th' Hesperian field, and see
 Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove 290
 The branches shoot with gold, where'er his step
 Marks the glad soil the tender clusters grow
 With purple ripeness, and invest each hill
 As with the blushes of an ev'ning sky ?
 Or wilt thou rather stoop thy vagrant plume 295
 Where gliding thro' his daughter's honour'd shades
 The smooth Peneus from his glassy flood
 Reflects purpureal Tempe's pleasant scene ?
 Fair Tempe ! haunt belov'd of sylvan pow'rs,
 Of Nymphs and Fauns, where in the Golden Age
 They play'd in secret on the shady brink 301
 With ancient Pan, while round their choral steps
 Young Hours and genial gales with constant hand
 Shower'd blossoms, odours, shower'd ambrosial dews,
 And spring's Elysian bloom. Her flow'ry store
 To thee nor Tempe shall refuse, nor watch 306
 Of winged Hydra guard Hesperian fruits
 From thy free spoil. O ! bear then unprov'd
 Thy smiling treasures to the green recess
 Where young Dione stays : with sweetest airs 310
 Entice her forth to lend her angel form
 For Beauty's honour'd image. Hither turn
 Thy graceful footsteps ; hither, gentle Maid !
 Incline thy polish'd forehead : let thy eyes
 Effuse the mildness of their azure dawn, 315

And may the fanning breezes waft aside
Thy radiant locks, disclosing as it bends
With airy softness from the marble neck
The cheek fair-blooming and the rosy lip,
Where winning Smiles and Pleasures sweet as Love
With sanctity and wisdom temp'ring blend 325
Their soft allurements : then the pleasing force
Of Nature, and her kind parental care,
Worthier I'd sing ; then all th' enamour'd youth
With each admiring virgin, to my lyre 325
Should throng attentive, while I point on high
Where Beauty's living image, like the Morn
That wakes in zephyr's arms the blushing May,
Moves onward, or as Venus when she flood
Effulgent on the pearly car and smil'd 330
Fresh from the deep, and conscious of her form,
To see the Tritons tune their vocal shells,
And each cerulean sister of the flood
With loud acclaim attend her o'er the waves
To seek th' Idalian bow'r. Ye smiling band 335
Of Youths and Virgins ! who thro' all the maze
Of young desire with rival steps pursue
This charm of beauty, if the pleasing toil
Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn
Your favourable ear, and trust my words. 340
I do not mean to wake the gloomy form
Of Superstition dress'd in Wisdom's garb
To damp your tender hopes ; I do not mean

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To bid the jealous Thund'rer fire the heav'ns,
 Or shapes infernal rend the groaning earth, 345
 To fright you from your joys : my cheerful song
 With better omens calls you to the field,
 Pleas'd with your gen'rous ardour in the chase,
 And warm like you. Then tell me, for ye know,
 Does Beauty ever deign to dwell where health 350
 And active use are strangers ? is her charm
 Confeſt in aught whose moſt peculiar ends
 Are lame and fruitleſs ? or did Nature mean
 This pleaſing call the herald of a lie,
 To hide the ſhame of diſcord and diſeaſe, 355
 And catch with fair hypocrify the heart
 Of idle Faith ? O no ! with better cares
 Th' indulgent mother, conſcious how infirm
 Her offſpring tread the paths of good and ill,
 By this illuſtrious image, in each kind 360
 Still moſt illuſtrious where the object holds
 Its native pow'rs moſt perfect, ſhe by this
 Illumes the headſtrong impulse of Deſire,
 And ſanctifies his choice. The gen'rous glebe
 Whose boſom ſmiles with verdure, the clear track
 Of ſtreams delicious to the thirſty ſoul, 366
 The bloom of nectar'd fruitage ripe to ſenſe,
 And ev'ry charm of animated things,
 Are only pledges of a ſtate ſincere,
 Th' integrity and order of their frame 370
 When all is well within, and ev'ry end
 Accompliſh'd. Thus was Beauty ſent from Heav'n
 The lovely miniſtrels of Truth and Good

In this dark world ; for Truth and Good are one,
 And Beauty dwells in them and they in her 375
 With like participation : wherefore then,
 O Sons of Earth ! would ye dissolve the tie !
 O ! wherefore with a rash impetuous aim

Ver. 374. — *Truth and Good are one.* — *And Beauty dwells in them, &c.]* “ Do you imagine,” says Socrates “ to Aristippus, that what is good is not beautiful ? “ have you not observed that these appearances always “ coincide ? Virtue, for instance, in the same respect “ as to which we call it good, is ever acknowledged “ to be beautiful also. In the characters of men “ we always join the two denominations together *. “ The beauty of human bodies corresponds in like “ manner with that æconomy of parts which consti- “ tutes them good, and in every circumstance of life “ the same object is constantly accounted both beauti- “ ful and good, inasmuch as it answers the purposes “ for which it was designed.” *Xenoph. Memorab. Socrat.* lib. iii. cap. 8.

This excellent observation has been illustrated and extended by the noble restorer of ancient philosophy. See *The Characteristics*, vol. ii. p. 339 and 422. and vol. iii. p. 181. And another ingenious author has particularly shewn that it holds in the general laws of Nature, in the works of art, and the conduct of the sciences. *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, Treat. i. sect. 2. As to the connexion between beauty and truth, there are two opinions concerning it. Some philosophers assert an independent and invariable law in Nature, in consequence of which “ all rational beings must alike perceive beauty in some “ certain proportions, and deformity in the contrary.” And this necessity being supposed the same with that which commands the assent or dissent of the under-

* This the Athenians did in a peculiar manner by the words καλοκαγαθός, καλοκαγαθία.

Seek ye those flow'ry joys with which the hand
 Of lavish Fancy paints each flatt'ring scene 380
 Where Beauty seems to dwell, nor once enquire
 Where is the sanction of eternal truth,
 Or where the seal of undeceitful good,
 To save your search from folly ! Wanting these,
 Lo ! Beauty withers in your void embrace, 385
 And with the glitt'ring of an idiot's toy

standing, it follows of course that beauty is founded on the universal and unchangeable law of truth.

But others there are who believe beauty to be merely a relative and arbitrary thing ; that indeed it was a benevolent provision in Nature to annex so delightful a sensation to those objects which are best and most perfect in themselves, that so we might be engaged to the choice of them at once, and without staying to infer their usefulness from their structure and effects ; but that it is not impossible, in a physical sense, that two beings of equal capacities for truth should perceive one of them beauty and the other deformity in the same proportions. And upon this supposition, by that truth which is always connected with beauty, nothing more can be meant than the conformity of any object to those proportions upon which, after careful examination, the beauty of that species is found to depend. Polycletus, for instance, a famous ancient sculptor, from an accurate mensuration of the several parts of the most perfect human bodies, deduced a canon or system of proportions which was the rule of all succeeding artists. Suppose a statue modelled according to this, a man of mere natural taste upon looking at it, without entering into its proportions, confesses and admires its beauty ; whereas a professor of the art applies his measures to the head, the neck, or the hand, and, without attending to its beauty, pronounces the workmanship to be just and true.

Did fancy mock your vows. Nor let the gleam
Of youthful hope that shines upon your hearts
Be chill'd or clouded at this awful task
To learn the lore of undeceitful good 390
And truth eternal. Tho' the pois'nous charms
Of baleful superstition guide the feet
Of servile numbers thro' a dreary way
To their abode, thro' deserts, thorns, and mire,
And leave the wretched pilgrim all forlorn 395
To muse at last amid the ghostly gloom
Of graves, and hoary vaults, and cloister'd cells,
To walk with spectres thro' the midnight shade,
And to the screaming owl's accursed song
Attune the dreadful workings of his heart, 400
Yet be not ye dismay'd; a gentler star
Your lovely search illumines. From the grove
Where Wisdom talk'd with her Athenian sons
Could my ambitious hand entwine a wreath
Of Plato's olive with the Mantuan bay, 405
Then should my pow'rful Verse at once dispel
Those monkish horrors, then in light divine
Disclose th' Elysian prospect, where the steps
Of those whom Nature charms thro' blooming walks,
Thro' fragrant mountains and poetic streams, 410
Amid the train of sages, heroes, bards,
Led by their winged Genius and the choir
Of laurell'd Science and harmonious Art,
Proceed exulting to th' eternal shrine
Where Truth conspicuous with her sister twins, 415
The undivided partners of her sway,

With Good and Beauty reigns. O let not us,
Lull'd by luxurious Pleasure's languid strain,
Or crouching to the frowns of bigot Rage,
O let us not a moment pause to join 420
That godlike band ! and if the gracious pow'r
Who first awaken'd my untutor'd song
Will to my invocation breathe anew
The tuneful spirit, then thro' all our paths
Ne'er shall the sound of this devoted lyre 425
Be wanting : whether on the rosy mead,
When summer smiles, to warn the melting heart
Of Luxury's allurements, whether firm
Against the torrent and the stubborn hill
To urge bold Virtue's unremitted nerve, 430
And wake the strong divinity of soul
That conquers Chance and Fate, or whether struck
For sounds of triumph to proclaim her toils
Upon the lofty summit, round her brow
To twine the wreath of incorruptive praise, 435
To trace her hallow'd light thro' future worlds,
And bless Heav'n's image in the heart of man.

Thus with a faithful aim have we presum'd
Advent'rous to delineate Nature's form,
Whether in vast majestic pomp array'd, 440
Or dress'd for pleasing wonder, or serene
In Beauty's rosy smile. It now remains
Thro' various Being's fair proportion'd scale
To trace the rising lustre of her charms
From their first twilight, shining forth at length

PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION. 43

To full meridian splendour. Of degree 446
 The least and lowliest in th' effusive warmth
 Of colours mingling with a random blaze
 Doth Beauty dwell; then higher in the line
 And variation of determin'd shape, 450
 Where Truth's eternal measures mark the bound
 Of circle, cube, or sphere: the third ascent
 Unites this vary'd symmetry of parts
 With colour's bland allurement, as the pearl
 Shines in the concave of its azure bed, 455
 And painted shells indent their speckled wreath,
 Then more attractive rise the blooming forms
 Thro' which the breath of Nature has infus'd
 Her genial pow'r to draw with pregnant veins
 Nutricious moisture from the bounteous earth 460
 In fruit and seed prolific; thus the flow'rs
 Their purple honours with the spring resume,
 And such the stately tree which autumn bends
 With blushing treasures. But more lovely still
 Is Nature's charm, where to the full consent 465
 Of complicated members, to the bloom
 Of colour and the vital change of growth
 Life's holy flame and piercing sense are giv'n,
 And active motion speaks the temper'd soul:
 So moves the bird of Juno, so the steed 470
 With rival ardour beats the dusty plain,
 And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy
 Salute their fellows. Thus doth Beauty dwell
 There most conspic'ous, ev'n in outward shape,

46 PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

Where dawns the high expression of a mind, 475
 By steps conducting our enraptur'd search
 To that Eternal Origin whose pow'r
 Thro' all th' unbounded symmetry of things,
 Like rays effulging from the parent sun,
 This endless mixture of her charms diffus'd. 480
 Mind, mind alone (bear witness, Earth and Heav'n!)
 The living fountains in itself contains
 Of beauteous and sublime : here hand in hand
 Sit paramount the Graces, here enthron'd
 Celestial Venus with divinest airs 485
 Invites the soul to never-fading joy.
 Look then abroad thro' Nature, to the range
 Of planets, suns, and adamantinè spheres,
 Wheeling unshaken thro' the void immense,
 And speak, O Man ! does this capacious scene 490
 With half that kindling majesty dilate
 Thy strong conception as when Brutus rose
 Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate
 Amid the crowd of patriots, and his arm
 Aloft extending, like eternal Jove 495
 When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
 On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,
 And bade the father of his country Hail !
 For lo the tyrant prostrate on the dust !

Ver. 492. *As when Brutus rose, &c.*] Cicero himself describes this fact — “ Cæsare intersecto — statim cruentum alte extollens M. Brutus pugionem, Cicero — nem nominatim exclamavit, atque ei recuperatam “ libertatem est gratulatus.” *Cic. Philipp.* ii. 12.

And Rome again is free ! Is aught so fair 500
In all the dewy landscapes of the spring,
In the bright eye of Hesper or the Morn,
In Nature's fairest forms is aught so fair
As virtuous friendship ? as the candid blush
Of him who strives with Fortune to be just ? 505
The graceful tear that streams for others' woes ?
Or the mild majesty of private life,
Where Peace with ever-blooming olive crowns
The gate, where Honour's lib'ral hands effuse
Unenvy'd treasures, and the snowy wings 510
Of Innocence and Love protect the scene ?
Once more search undismay'd the dark profound
Where Nature works in secret, view the beds
Of mineral treasure, and th' eternal vault
That bounds the hoary ocean ; trace the forms 515
Of atoms moving with incessant change
Their elemental round, behold the seeds
Of being, and the energy of life
Kindling the mass with ever-active flame,
Then to the secrets of the working mind 520
Attentive turn ; from dim oblivion call
Her fleet ideal band, and bid them go ;
Break thro' time's barrier, and o'ertake the hour
That saw the heav'ns created ; then declare
If aught were found in those external scenes 525
To move thy wonder now. For what are all
The forms which brute unconscious matter wears,
Greatness of bulk, or symmetry of parts ?

48 PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

Not reaching to the heart soon feeble grows
 The superficial impulse ; dull their charms, 534
 And satiate soon, and pall the languid eye.
 Not so the moral species, nor the powers
 Of genius and design : th' ambitious Mind
 There sees herself ; by these congenial forms
 Touch'd and awaken'd, with intenser act 535
 She bends each nerve, and meditates well pleas'd
 Her features in the mirror : for of all
 The inhabitants of earth to man alone
 Creative Wisdom gave to lift his eye
 To truth's eternal measures, thence to frame 540
 The sacred laws of action and of will,
 Discerning justice from unequal deeds,
 And temperance from folly. But beyond
 This energy of truth, whose dictates bind
 Assenting reason, the benignant Sire, 545
 To deck the honour'd paths of just and good,
 Has added bright Imagination's rays,
 Where Virtue rising from the awful depth
 Of Truth's mysterious bosom doth forsake
 Th' unadorn'd condition of her birth, 550
 And dress'd by Fancy in ten thousand hues
 Assumes a various feature, to attract

Ver. 548, *Where Virtue rising from the awful depth—
 Of Truth's mysterious bosom, &c.* According to the opi-
 nion of those who assert moral obligation to be founded
 on an immutable and universal law, and that which is
 usually called the moral sense, to be determined by
 the peculiar temper of the imagination and the ear-
 liest associations of ideas.

With charms responsive to each gazer's eye
 The hearts of men. Amid his rural walk
 Th' ingenuous youth, whom solitude inspires 555
 With purest wishes, from the pensive shade
 Beholds her moving like a virgin Muse
 That wakes her lyre to some indulgent theme
 Of harmony and wonder, while among
 The herd of servile minds her strenuous form 560
 Indignant flashes on the patriot's eye,
 And thro' the rolls of memory appeals
 To ancient honour, or, in act serene
 Yet watchful, raises the majestic sword
 Of public pow'r, from dark Ambition's reach 565
 To guard the sacred volume of the laws.

Genius of ancient Greece! whose faithful steps
 Well pleas'd I follow thro' the sacred paths
 Of Nature and of Science! Nurse divine
 Of all heroic deeds and fair desires! 570
 O let the breath of thy extended praise
 Inspire my kindling bosom to the height
 Of this untempted theme! Nor be my thoughts
 Presumptuous counted, if amid the calm
 That sooths this vernal ev'ning into smiles, 575
 I steal impatient from the sordid haunts
 Of Strife and low Ambition to attend
 Thy sacred presence in the sylvan shade,
 By their malignant footsteps ne'er profan'd.
 Descend propitious to my favour'd eye! 580

50 PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

Such in thy mien, thy warm exalted air,
 As when the Persian tyrant foil'd, and stung
 With shame and desperation, gnash'd his teeth
 To see thee rend the pageants of his throne,
 And at the lightning of thy lifted spear 585
 Crouch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial spoils,
 Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal songs,
 Thy smiling band of arts, thy godlike fires
 Of civil wisdom, thy heroic youth,
 Warm from the schools of glory. Guide my way
 Thro' fair Lyceum's walk, the green retreats 591
 Of Academus, and the thymy vale
 Where oft' enchanted with Socratic sounds
 Ilissus pure devolv'd his tuneful stream
 In gentler murmurs. From the blooming store 595
 Of these auspicious fields may I unblam'd
 Transplant some living blossoms to adorn
 My native clime; while far above the flight
 Of Fancy's plume aspiring I unlock
 The springs of ancient wisdom; while I join 600
 Thy name, thrice honour'd! with th' immortal praise
 Of Nature; while to my compatriot youth
 I point the high example of thy sons,
 And tune to Attic themes the British lyre. 604

Ver. 591. *Lyceum*.] The school of Aristotle.

Ver. 592. *Academus*.] The school of Plato.

Ver. 594. *Ilissus*.] One of the rivers on which Athens was situated. Plato in some of his finest Dialogues lays the scene of the conversation with Socrates on its banks.

THE
PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE separation of the works of Imagination from philosophy the cause of their abuse among the Moderns. Prospect of their reunion under the influence of public liberty. Enumeration of accidental Pleasures, which increase the effect of objects delightful to the Imagination. The Pleasures of sense. Particular circumstances of the mind. Discovery of truth. Perception of contrivance and design. Emotion of the passions. All the natural passions partake of a pleasing sensation; with the final cause of this constitution illustrated by an Allegorical Vision, and exemplified in sorrow, pity, terror and indignation.

WHEN shall the laurel and the vocal string
Resume their honours? when shall we behold
The tuneful tongue, the Promethean hand,
Aspire to ancient praise? Alas! how faint,
How slow, the dawn of beauty and of truth 5
Breaks the reluctant shades of Gothic night
Which yet involve the nations! Long they groan'd
Beneath the furies of rapacious Force
Oft' as the gloomy North with iron swarms
Tempest'ous pouring from her frozen caves 10
Blasted the Italian shore, and swept the works
Of Liberty and Wisdom down the gulph
Of all-devouring Night. As long immur'd
In noontide darkness by the glimm'ring lamp
Each Muse and each fair Science pin'd away 15
The fordid hours, while foul Barbarian hands

Their mysteries profan'd, unstrung the lyre,
 And chain'd the soaring pinion down to earth.
 At last the Muses rose and spurn'd their bonds,
 And wildly warbling scatter'd as they flew 22
 Their blooming wreaths from fair Valclufa's bow'rs
 To Arno's myrtle border and the shore
 Of soft Parthenope. But still the rage
 Of dire Ambition and gigantic Pow'r

Ver. 19. *At last the Muses rose, &c.*] About the age of Hugh Capet, founder of the third race of French kings, the poets of Provence were in high reputation, a sort of strolling bards or rhapsodists, who went about the courts of princes and noblemen entertaining them at festivals with music and poetry. They attempted both the epic, ode, and satire, and abounded in a wild and fantastic vein of fable, partly allegorical, and partly founded on traditionary legends of the Saracen wars. These were the rudiments of Italian poetry. But their taste and composition must have been extremely barbarous, as we may judge by those who followed the turn of their fable in much politer times, such as Boiardo, Bernardo, Tasso, Ariosto, &c.

Ver. 21. *Valclufa.*] The famous retreat of Francisco Petrarcha, the father of Italian poetry, and his mistress Laura, a lady of Avignon.

Ver. 22. *Arno.*] The river which runs by Florence, the birth-place of Dante and Boccaccio.

Ver. 23. *Parthenope.*] Or Naples, the birth-place of Sannazaro. The great Torquato Tasso was born at Sorrento in the kingdom of Naples.

Ibid. --the rage—Of dire Ambition, &c.] This relates to the cruel wars among the republics of Italy, and abominable politics of its little princes, about the fifteenth century. These at last, in conjunction with the Papal power, entirely extinguished the spirit of liberty in that country, and established that abuse of the fine arts which has been since propagated over all Europe.

From public aims and from the busy walk 25
 Of civil commerce drove the bolder train
 Of penetrating Science to the cells
 Where studious Ease consumes the silent hour
 In shadowy searches and unfruitful care.
 Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts 30
 Of mimic fancy and harmonious joy
 To priestly domination and the lust
 Of lawless courts their amiable toil

Ver. 30. *Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts, &c.*] Nor were they only losers by the separation; for philosophy itself, to use the words of a noble philosopher, "being thus severed by the sprightly arts and sciences, must consequently grow drowsy, insipid, pedantic, useless, and directly opposite to the real knowledge and practice of the world." Inasmuch that "a gentleman," says another excellent writer, "cannot easily bring himself to like so austere and ungainly a form; so greatly is it changed from what was once the delight of the finest gentlemen of Antiquity, and their recreation after the hurry of public affairs!" From this condition it cannot be recovered but by uniting it once more with the works of Imagination; and we have had the pleasure of observing a very great progress made towards their union in England within these few years. It is hardly possible to conceive them at a greater distance from each other than at the Revolution, when Locke stood at the head of one party, and Dryden of the other. But the general spirit of liberty which has ever since been growing naturally invited our men of wit and genius to improve that influence which the arts of persuasion gave them with the people, by applying them to subjects of importance to society. Thus poetry and eloquence became considerable, and philosophy is now of course obliged to borrow of their embellishments in order even to gain audience with the public.

54 PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

For three inglorious ages have resign'd,
 In vain reluctant, and Torquato's tongue 35
 Was tun'd for slavish Pæans at the throne
 Of Tinsel Pomp, and Raphael's magic hand
 Effus'd its fair creation to enchant
 The fond adoring herd in Latian fanes
 To blind belief, while on their prostrate necks 40
 The fable tyrant plants his heel secure.
 But now, behold ! the radiant æra dawns
 When Freedom's ample fabric, fix'd at length
 For endless years on Albion's happy shore,
 In full proportion once more shall extend 45
 To all the kindred pow'rs of social bliss
 A common mansion, a parental roof :
 There shall the Virtues, there shall Wisdom's train,
 Their long-lost friends rejoining, as of old,
 Embrace the smiling family of Arts, 50
 The Muses and the Graces. Then no more
 Shall Vice, distracting their delicious gifts
 To aims abhorr'd, with high distaste and scorn
 Turn from their charms the philosophic eye,
 The patriot bosom ; then no more the paths 55
 Of public care or intellectual toil
 Alone by footsteps haughty and severe
 In gloomy state be trod : th' harmonious Muse
 And her persuasive sisters then shall plant
 Their shelt'ring laurels o'er the bleak ascent, 60
 And scatter flow'rs along the rugged way.

Arm'd with the lyre, already have we dar'd
To pierce divine Philosophy's retreats
And teach the Muse her lore, already strove
Their long-divided honours to unite, 65
While temp'ring this deep argument we sang
Of Truth and Beauty. Now the same glad task
Impends; now urging our ambitious toil
We hasten to recount the various springs
Of adventitious Pleasure, which adjoin 70
Their grateful influence to the prime effect
Of objects grand or beauteous, and enlarge
The complicated joy. The sweets of sense
Do they not oft' with kind accession flow
To raise harmonious fancy's native charm? 75
So while we taste the fragrance of the rose
Glow not her blush the fairer? while we view
Amid the noontide walk a limpid rill
Gush thro' the trickling herbage, to the thirst
Of summer yielding the delicious draught 80
Of cool refreshment, o'er the mossy brink
Shines not the surface clearer, and the waves
With sweeter musick murmur as they flow?
Nor this alone. The various lot of life
Oft' from external circumstance assumes 85
A moment's disposition to rejoice
In those delights which at a diff'rent hour
Would pass unheeded. Fair the face of spring
When rural songs and odours wake the Morn

56 PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

To ev'ry eyē; but how much more to his 90
 Round whom the bed of sickness long diffus'd
 Its melancholy gloom! how doubly fair
 When first with fresh-born vigour he inhales
 The balmy breeze, and feels the blessed sun
 Warm at his bosom, from the springs of life 95
 Chasing oppressive damps and languid pain!

Or shall I mention where celestial Truth
 Her awful light discloses, to bestow
 A more majestick pomp on Beauty's frame? 99
 For man loves knowledge, and the beams of truth
 More welcome touch his understanding's eye,
 Than all the blandishments of sound his ear,
 Than all of taste his tongue. Nor ever yet
 The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctur'd hues
 To me have shone so pleasing as when first 105
 The hand of Science pointed out the path
 In which the sun-beams gleaming from the west
 Fall on the wat'ry cloud whose darksome veil
 Involves the orient, and that trickling show'r
 Piercing thro' ev'ry crystalline convex 110
 Of clust'ring dewdrops to their flight oppos'd
 Recoil at length where concave all behind
 Th' internal surface of each glassy orb
 Repels their forward passage into air,
 That thence direct they seek the radiant goal 115
 From which their course began, and as they strike
 In diff'rent lines the gazer's obvious eye

Assume a diff'rent lustre thro' the brede
Of colours changing from the splendid rose
To the pale violet's dejected hue. 120

Or shall we touch that kind access of joy
That springs to each fair object while we trace
Thro' all its fabrick Wisdom's artful aim
Disposing ev'ry part, and gaining still
By means proportion'd her benignant end ? 125
Speak ye the pure delight whose favour'd steps
The lamp of Science thro' the jealous maze
Of Nature guides, when haply you reveal
Her secret honours, whether in the sky,
The beauteous laws of light, the central pow'rs 130
That wheel the pensile planets round the year,
Whether in wonders of the rolling deep,
Or the rich fruits of all-sustaining earth,
Or fine-adjusted springs of life and sense,
Ye scan the counsels of their Author's hand. 135

What, when to raise the meditated scene
The flame of passion thro' the struggling soul
Deep-kindled shews across that sudden blaze
The object of its rapture, vast of size,
With fiercer colours and a night of shade ? 140
What ? like a storm from their capacious bed
The sounding seas o'erwhelming, when the might
Of these eruptions working from the depth
Of man's strong apprehension shakes his frame
Ev'n to the base, from ev'ry naked sense 145

Of pain or pleasure dissipating all
 Opinion's feeble coverings, and the veil
 Spun from the cobweb fashion of the times
 To hide the feeling heart? then Nature speaks
 Her genuine language, and the words of men, 150
 Big with the very motion of their souls,
 Declare with what accumulated force
 Th' impetuous nerve of passion urges on
 The native weight and energy of things.

Yet more her honours : where nor beauty claims
 Nor shews of good the thirsty sense allure, 155
 From passion's pow'r alone our nature holds
 Essential Pleasure. Passion's fierce illapse
 Rouses the mind's whole fabrick, with supplies
 Of daily impulse keeps th' elastick pow'rs 160

Ver. 157. *From passion's pow'r alone, &c.*] This very mysterious kind of Pleasure, which is often found in the exercise of passions generally counted painful, has been taken notice of by several authors. Lucretius resolves it into self-love :

Suave mari magno, &c. Lib. ii. 1.

As if a man was never pleased in being moved at the distress of a tragedy, without a cool reflection, that though these fictitious personages were so unhappy, yet he himself was perfectly at ease and in safety. The ingenious author of the *Reflexions Critiques sur la Poésie et sur la Peinture*, accounts for it by the general delight which the mind takes in its own activity, and the abhorrence it feels of an indolent and inattentive state: and this joined with the moral approbation of its own temper, which attends these emotions when natural and just, is certainly the true foundation of the pleasure, which as it is the origin and basis of tragedy and epick, deserved a very particular consideration in this poem.

Intensely pois'd, and polishes anew,
By that collision, all the fine machine;
Else rust would rise, and foulness, by degrees
Incumb'ring, choke at last what Heav'n design'd
For ceaseless motion and a round of toil. 163
— But say, Does ev'ry passion thus to man
Administer delight? That name indeed
Becomes the rosy breath of Love, becomes
The radiant smiles of Joy, th' applauding hand
Of Admiration; but the bitter show'r 170
That Sorrow sheds upon a brother's grave,
But the dumb palsy of nocturnal Fear,
Or those consuming fires that gnaw the heart
Of panting Indignation, find we there
To move delight? — Then listen while my tongue
Th' unalter'd will of Heav'n with faithful awe 176
Reveals, what old Harmodius wont to teach
My early age: Harmodius! who had weigh'd
Within his learned mind whate'er the schools
Of Wisdom, or thy lonely-whisp'ring voice, 180
O faithful Nature! dictate of the laws
Which govern and support this mighty frame
Of universal being: oft the hours
From morn to eve have stol'n unmark'd away
While mute attention hung upon his lips; 185
As thus the sage his awful tale began:
“ 'Twas in the windings of an ancient wood,
“ When spotless youth with solitude resigns

" To sweet philosophy the studious day,
 " What time pale Autumn shades the silent eve, 190
 " Musing I rov'd. Of good and evil much,
 " And much of mortal man, my thought revolv'd;
 " When starting full on Fancy's gushing eye
 " The mournful image of Parthenia's fate
 " That hour, O long belov'd and long deplor'd! 195
 " When blooming youth nor gentlest Wisdom's arts,
 " Nor Hymen's honours gather'd for thy brow,
 " Nor all thy lover's, all thy father's tears,
 " Avail'd to snatch thee from the cruel grave,
 " Thy agonizing looks, thy last farewell, 200
 " Struck to the inmost feeling of my soul
 " As with the hand of Death! At once the shade
 " More horrid nodded o'er me, and the winds
 " With hoarser murm'ring shook the branches. Dark
 " As midnight storms the scene of human things 205
 " Appear'd before me; deserts, burning sands,
 " Where the parch'd adder dies; the frozen south,
 " And desolation blasting all the west
 " With rapine and with murder: tyrant Power
 " Here sits enthron'd with blood; the baleful charms
 " Of Superstition there infect the skies, 211
 " And turn the sun to horror. Gracious Heav'n!
 " What is the life of man? or cannot these,
 " Not these portents, thy awful will suffice?
 " That propagated thus beyond their scope 215
 " They rise to act their cruelties anew

- " In my afflicted bosom, thus decreed
 " The universal sensitive of pain,
 " The wretched heir of evils not its own!
 " Thus I impatient; when at once effus'd 220
 " A flashing torrent of celestial day
 " Burst thro' the shadowy void. With slow descent
 " A purple cloud came floating thro' the sky,
 " And pois'd at length within the circling trees
 " Hung obvious to my view, till op'ning wide 225
 " Its lucid orb a more than human form
 " Emerging, lean'd majestick o'er my head,
 " And instant thunder shook the conscious grove;
 " Then melted into air the liquid cloud,
 " And all the shining vision stood reveal'd. 230
 " A wreath of palm his ample forehead bound,
 " And o'er his shoulder mantling to his knee
 " Flow'd the transparent robe, around his waist
 " Collected with a radiant zone of gold
 " Ethereal; there in mystick signs engrav'd 235
 " I read his office high and sacred name,
 " Genius of Humankind. Appall'd I gaz'd
 " The godlike presence, for athwart his brow
 " Displeasure temper'd with a mild concern
 " Look'd down reluctant on me, and his words 240
 " Like distant thunders broke the murmuring air.
 " Vain are thy thoughts, O Child of mortal birth!
 " And impotent thy tongue. Is thy short span
 " Capacious of this universal frame?

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- " Thy wisdom all-sufficient ? Thou, alas ! 245
 " Dost thou aspire to judge between the Lord
 " Of Nature and his works ? to lift thy voice
 " Against the sov'reign order he decreed,
 " All good and lovely ? to blaspheme the bands
 " Of tendernefs innate and social love, 253
 " Holiest of things ! by which the gen'ral orb
 " Of being, as by adamant links,
 " Was drawn to perfect union, and sustain'd
 " From everlasting ? Hast thou felt the pangs
 " Of soft'ning sorrow, of indignant zeal, 255
 " So grievous to the soul as thence to wish
 " The ties of Nature broken from thy frame,
 " That so thy selfish unrelenting heart
 " Might cease to mourn its lot, no longer then
 " The wretched heir of evils not its own ? 260
 " O fair benevolence of gen'rous minds !
 " O man by Nature form'd for all mankind !"
 " He spokc ; abash'd and silent I remain'd,
 " As conscious of my tongue's offence, and aw'd
 " Before his presence, tho' my secret soul 265
 " Disdain'd the imputation. On the ground
 " I fix'd my eyes, till from his airy couch
 " He stoop'd sublime, and touching with his hand
 " My dazzling forehead, " Raise thy sight," he cry'd,
 " And let thy sense convince thy erring tongue." 270
 " I look'd, and lo ! the former scene was chang'd ;
 " For verdant alleys and surrounding trees

- " A solitary prospect wide and wild
 " Rush'd on my senses. 'Twas an horrid pile
 " Of hills, with many a shaggy forest mix'd, 275
 " With many a fable cliff and glitt'ring stream.
 " Aloft recumbent o'er the hanging ridge [springs
 " The brown woods wav'd, while ever-trickling
 " Wash'd from the naked roots of oak and pine
 " The crumbling soil, and still at ev'ry fall 280
 " Down the steep windings of the channell'd rock
 " Remurm'ring rush'd the congregated floods
 " With hoarser inundation, till at last
 " They reach'd a grassy plain which from the skirts
 " Of that high desert spread her verdant lap, 285
 " And drank the gushing moisture, where confin'd
 " In one smooth current o'er the lilled vale
 " Clearer than glass it flow'd. Autumnal spoils
 " Luxuriant spreading to the rays of morn
 " Blush'd o'er the cliffs, whose half-encircling mound
 " As in a sylvan theatre enclos'd 291
 " That flow'ry level. On the river's brink
 " I spy'd a fair pavilion, which diffus'd
 " Its floating umbrage 'mid the silver shade
 " Of osiers. Now the western sun reveal'd 295
 " Between two parting cliffs his golden orb,
 " And pour'd across the shadow of the hills
 " On rocks and floods a yellow stream of light
 " That cheer'd the solemn scene. My list'ning pow'rs
 " Were aw'd, and ev'ry thought in silence hung 300

“ And wondering expectation : then the voice
 “ Of that celestial pow’r the mystick show
 “ Declaring, thus my deep attention call’d :
 “ Inhabitant of earth, to whom is giv’n

Ver. 304. *Inhabitant of earth, &c.*] The account of the economy of Providence here introduced, as the most proper to calm and satisfy the mind when under the compunction of private evils, seems to have come originally from the Pythagorean school ; but of the ancient philosophers Plato has most largely insisted upon it, has established it with all the strength of his capacious understanding, and ennobled it with all the magnificence of his divine imagination. He has one passage so full and clear on this head, that I am persuaded the reader will be pleased to see it here though somewhat long. Addressing himself to such as are not satisfied concerning divine Providence ; “ The Being who presides over the whole,” says he, “ has disposed and complicated all things for the happiness and virtue of the whole, every part of which, according to the extent of its influence, does and suffers what is fit and proper. One of these parts is your’s, O unhappy man ! which though in itself most inconsiderable and minute, yet being connected with the universe, ever seeks to co-operate with that supreme order. You in the mean time are ignorant of the very end for which all particular natures are brought into existence, that the all-comprehending nature of the whole may be perfect and happy ; existing as it does not for your sake, but the cause and reason of your existence, which, as in the symmetry of every artificial work, must of necessity concur with the general design of the artist, and be subservient to the whole, of which it is a part. Your complaint therefore is ignorant and groundless, since according to the various energy of creation and the common laws of Nature there is a constant provision of that which is best, at the same time for you and for the whole.—For the governing Intelligence clearly

" The gracious ways of Providence to learn, 305

" Receive my sayings with a stedfast ear.—

" Know then the Sovereign Spirit of the world,

" Tho' self-collected from eternal time

" Within his own deep essence he beheld

" The bounds of true felicity complete, 310

" Yet by immense benignity inclin'd

" beholding all the actions of animated and self-moving

" creatures, and that mixture of good and evil which

" diversifies them, considered first of all by what dis-

" position of things, and by what situation of each in-

" dividual in the general system, vice might be de-

" pressed and subdued, and virtue made secure of

" victory and happiness, with the greatest facility, and

" in the highest degree possible: in this manner he

" ordered through the entire circle of being the inter-

" nal constitution of every mind, where should be its

" station in the universal fabrick, and through what

" variety of circumstances it should proceed in the

" whole tenour of its existence." He goes on in his

" sublime manner to assert a future state of retribution,

" as well for those who by the exercise of good dis-

" positions being harmonized and assimilated into the

" divine virtue, are consequently removed to a place of

" unblemished sanctity and happiness, as of those who

" by the most flagitious arts have risen from contemp-

" tible beginnings to the greatest affluence and power,

" and whom you therefore look upon as unanswer-

" able instances of negligence in the gods, because you

" are ignorant of the purposes to which they are sub-

" servient, and in what manner they contribute to that

" supreme intention of good to the whole." *Plato de*

Leg. x. 16.

This theory has been delivered of late, especially a-

broad, in a manner which subverts the freedom of hu-

man actions; whereas Plato appears very careful to

preserve it, and has been in that respect imitated by

the best of his followers.

" To spread around him that primeval joy
 " Which fill'd himself, he rais'd his plastle arm
 " And sounded thro' the hollow depth of space
 " The strong creative mandate; straight arose 315
 " These heav'nly orbs, the glad abodes of life
 " Effusive kindled by his breath divine
 " Thro' endless forms of being: each inhal'd
 " From him its portion of the vital flame,
 " In measure such that from the wide complex 320
 " Of coexistent orders one might rise,
 " One order, all-involving and entire.
 " He too beholding in the sacred light
 " Of his essential reason all the shapes
 " Of swift contingency, all successive ties 325
 " Of action propagated thro' the sum
 " Of possible existence, he at once
 " Down the long series of eventful time
 " So fix'd the dates of being, so dispos'd
 " To ev'ry living soul of ev'ry kind 330
 " The field of motion, and the hour of rest,
 " That all conspir'd to his supreme design,
 " To universal good; with full accord
 " Answering the mighty model he had chosen,
 " The best and fairest of unnumber'd worlds 335

Ver 321.—*one might rise,—One order, &c.*] See *The Meditations of Antoninus*, and *The Characteristics*, *passim*.

Ver. 335. *The best and fairest, &c.*] This opinion is so old, that Timæus Locrus calls the Supreme Being *δημιουργος τοῦ βελτίου*, "The Artificer of that which is best;" and represents him as resolving in the beginning to produce the most excellent work, and as copying the world most exactly from his own intellē.

" That lay from everlasting in the store
 " Of his divine conceptions. Nor content
 " By one exertion of creative pow'r
 " His goodness to reveal, thro' ev'ry age,
 " Thro' ev'ry moment up the track of time, 310
 " His parent hand with ever-new increase
 " Of happiness and virtue has adorn'd
 " The vast harmonious frame : his parent hand
 " From the mute shell-fish gasping on the shore
 " To men, to angels, to celestial minds, 345
 " For ever leads the generations on
 " To higher scenes of being, while supply'd
 " From day to day with his enliv'ning breath
 " Inferior orders in succession rise
 " To fill the void below. As flame ascends, 350
 " As bodies to their proper centre move,
 " As the pois'd ocean to th' attractive moon
 " Obedient swells, and ev'ry headlong stream
 " Devolves its winding waters to the main,
 " So all things which have life aspire to God, 355
 " The sun of being, boundless, unimpair'd,

gible and essential idea ; " so that it yet remains as it
 " was at first, perfect in beauty, and will never stand in
 " need of any correction or improvement." There
 can be no room for a caution here to understand the
 expressions not of any particular circumstances of hu-
 man life separately considered, but of the sum or uni-
 versal system of life and being. See also *The Vision* at
 the end of *The Theodicee* of *Leibnitz*.

Ver. 350. *As flame ascends, &c.*] This opinion, tho'
 not held by Plato nor any of the Antients, is yet a very
 natural consequence of his principles : but the disqui-
 sition is too complex and extensive to be entered upon
 here,

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" Centre of souls! Nor does the faithful voice
 " Of Nature cease to prompt their eager steps
 " Aright, nor is the care of Heav'n withheld
 " From granting to the task proportion'd aid, 360
 " That in their stations all may persevere
 " To climb th' ascent of being, and approach
 " For ever nearer to the life divine.
 " That rocky pile thou seest, that verdant lawn,
 " Fresh water'd from the mountains. Let the scene
 " Paint in thy fancy the primeval seat 366
 " Of man, and where the Will Supreme ordain'd
 " His mansion, that pavilion fair diffus'd
 " Along the shady brink, in this recess
 " To wear th' appointed season of his youth, 370
 " Till riper hours should open to his toil
 " The high communion of superior minds,
 " Of consecrated heroes and of gods.
 " Nor did the Sire Omnipotent forget
 " His tender bloom to cherish, nor withheld 375
 " Celestial footsteps from his green abode:
 " Oft from the radiant honours of his throne
 " He sent whom most he lov'd, the Sov'reign Fair,
 " The effluence of his glory, whom he plac'd
 " Before his eyes for ever to behold, 380
 " The goddess from whose inspiration flows
 " The toil of patriots, the delight of friends,
 " Without whose work divine in heav'n or earth
 " Nought lovely, nought propitious, comes to pass,

- " Nor hope, nor praise, nor honour. Her the Sire
 " Gave it in charge to rear the blooming mind, 386
 " The folded pow'rs to open, to direct
 " The growth luxuriant of his young desires,
 " And from the laws of this majestick world
 " To teach him what was good. As thus the nymph
 " Her daily care attended, by her side 391
 " With constant steps her gay companion stay'd,
 " The fair Euphrosyne ! the gentle queen
 " Of smiles, and graceful gladness, and delights
 " That cheer alike the hearts of mortal men 395
 " And pow'rs immortal. See the shining Pair !
 " Behold where from his dwelling now disclos'd
 " They quit their youthful charge and seek the skies."
 " I look'd, and on the flow'ry turf there stood
 " Between two radiant forms a smiling youth 400
 " Whose tender cheeks display'd the vernal flow'r
 " Of beauty, sweetest innocence illum'd
 " His bashful eyes, and on his polish'd brow
 " Sat young Simplicity. With fond regard
 " He view'd th' associates as their steps they mov'd ;
 " The younger chief his ardent eyes detain'd, 406
 " With mild regret invoking her return ;
 " Bright as the star of ev'ning she appear'd
 " Amid the dusky scene : eternal youth
 " O'er all her form its glowing honours breath'd,
 " And smiles eternal from her candid eyes 411
 " Flow'd like the dewy lustre of the morn

- “ Effusive trembling on the placid waves :
“ The spring of heav’n had shed its blushing spoils.
“ To bind her sable tresses ; full diffus’d 415
“ Her yellow mantle floated in the breeze,
“ And in her hand she wav’d a living branch
“ Rich with immortal fruits of pow’r to calm
“ The wrathful heart, and from the bright’ning eye
“ To chase the cloud of sadness. More sublime 420
“ The heav’nly partner mov’d : the prime of age
“ Compos’d her steps : the presence of a god,
“ High on the circle of her brow enthron’d,
“ From each majestick motion darted awe,
“ Devoted awe ! till cherish’d by her looks, 425
“ Benevolent and meek, confiding love .
“ To filial rapture soften’d all the soul.
“ Free in her graceful hand she pois’d the sword
“ Of chaste dominion : an heroick crown
“ Display’d the old simplicity of pomp 430
“ Around her honour’d head : a matron’s robe
“ White as the sunshine-streams thro’ vernal clouds
“ Her stately form invested. Hand in hand
“ Th’ immortal pair forsook th’ enamell’d green,
“ Ascending slowly : rays of limpid light 435
“ Glean’d round their path ; celestial sounds were
“ And through the fragrant air ethereal dews [heard,
“ Distill’d around them, till at once the clouds
“ Disparting wide in midway sky withdrew
“ Their airy veil, and left a bright expanse 440

- “ Of empyrean flame, where spent and drown’d
“ Afflicted vision plung’d in vain to scan
“ What object it involv’d. My feeble eyes
“ Endur’d not. Bending down to earth I stood
“ With dumb attention. Soon a female voice, 445
“ As wat’ry murmurs sweet or warbling shades,
“ With sacred invocation thus began :
“ Father of gods and mortals ! whose right arm
“ With reins eternal guides the moving heav’ns,
“ Bend thy propitious ear : behold well-pleas’d 450
“ I seek to finish thy divine decree.
“ With frequent steps I visit yonder seat
“ Of man, thy offspring, from the tender seeds
“ Of justice and of wisdom to evolve
“ The latent honours of his gen’rous frame, 455
“ Till thy conducting hand shall raise his lot
“ From earth’s dim scene to these ethereal walks,
“ The temple of thy glory. But not me,
“ Not my directing voice, he oft requires,
“ Or hears delighted : this enchanting maid, 460
“ Th’ associate thou hast giv’n me, her alone
“ He loves, O Father ! absent her he craves ;
“ And but for her glad presence ever join’d
“ Rejoices not in mine ; that all my hopes
“ This thy benignant purpose to fulfil 465
“ I deem uncertain, and my daily cares
“ Unfruitful all and vain, unless by thee
“ Still farther aided in the work divine.”

- " She ceas'd; a voice more awful thus reply'd;
 " O thou! in whom for ever I delight, 470
 " Fairer than all th' inhabitants of heav'n,
 " Best image of thy Author! far from thee
 " Be disappointment, or distaste, or blame,
 " Who soon or late shalt ev'ry work fulfil,
 " And no resistance find. If man refuse 475
 " To hearken to thy dictates, or allur'd
 " By meaner joys to any other pow'r
 " Transfer the honours due to thee alone,
 " That joy which he pursues he ne'er shall taste,
 " That pow'r in whom delighteth ne'er behold. 480
 " Go then once more, and happy be thy toil;
 " Go then, but let not this thy smiling friend
 " Partake thy footsteps. In her stead, behold
 " With thee the son of Nemesis I send,
 " The fiend abhorr'd! whose vengeance takes account
 " Of sacred Order's violated laws. 485
 " See where he calls thee, burning to be gone,
 " Fierce to exhaust the tempest of his wrath
 " On yon' devoted head. But thou, my child!
 " Control his cruel phrenzy, and protect 490
 " Thy tender charge, that when despair shall grasp
 " His agonizing bosom he may learn,
 " Then he may learn, to love the gracious hand
 " Alone sufficient in the hour of ill
 " To save his feeble spirit; then confess 495
 " Thy genuine honours, O excelling Fair!

- " When all the plagues that wait the deadly will
" Of this avenging demon, all the storms
" Of night infernal, serve but to display
" The energy of thy superior charms 500
" With mildest awe triumphant o'er his rage,
" And shining clearer in the horrid gloom."
" Here ceas'd that awful voice, and soon I felt
" The cloudy curtain of refreshing eve
" Was clos'd once more, from that immortal fire
" Shelt'ring my eyelids. Looking up I view'd 506
" A vast gigantick spectre striding on
" Thro' murm'ring thunders and a waste of clouds
" With dreadful action. Black as night his brow
" Relentless frowns involv'd : his savage limbs 510
" With sharp impatience violent he writh'd
" As through convulsive anguish ; and his hand,
" Arm'd with a scorpion lash, full oft he rais'd
" In madness to his bosom ; while his eyes
" Rain'd bitter tears, and bellowing loud he shook
" The void with horror. Silent by his side 516
" The virgin came ; no discomposure stirr'd
" Her features ; from the glooms which hung around
" No stain of darkness mingled with the beam
" Of her divine effulgence. Now they stoop 520
" Upon the river bank, and now to hail
" His wonted guests with eager steps advanc'd
" The unsuspecting inmate of the shade.
" As when a famish'd wolf that all night long

- " Had rang'd the Alpine snows by chance at morn
" Sees from a cliff incumbent o'er the smoke 526
" Of some lone village a neglected kid
" That strays along the wild for herb or spring,
" Down from the winding ridge he sweeps again,
" And thinks he tears him ; so with tenfold rage 530
" The monster sprung remorseless on his prey.
" Amaz'd the stripling stood ; with panting breast
" Feebly he pour'd the lamentable wail
" Of helpless consternation, struck at once
" And rooted to the ground. The queen beheld 535
" His terror, and with looks of tend'rest care
" Advanc'd to save him. Soon the tyrant felt
" Her awful pow'r : his keen tempestuous arm
" Hung nerveless, nor descended where his rage
" Had aim'd the deadly blow, then dumb retir'd
" With sullen rancour. Lo ! the sovereign maid 541
" Folds with a mother's arms the fainting boy
" Till life rekindles in his rosy cheek, [tongue.
" Then grasps his hands, and cheers him with her
" " O wake thee, rouse thy spirit ! shall the spite
" Of yon' tormentor thus appal thy heart, 546
" While I thy friend and guardian am at hand
" To rescue and to heal ? O let thy soul
" Remember what the will of Heav'n ordains
" Is ever good for all, and if for all 550
" Then good for thee. Nor only by the warmth
" And soothing sunshine of delightful things

- " Do minds grow up and flourish. Oft' misled
 " By that bland light the young unpractis'd views
 " Of reason wander through a fatal road, 555
 " Far from their native aim, as if to lie
 " Inglorious in the fragrant shade, and wait
 " The soft access of ever-circling joys,
 " Were all the end of being. Ask thyself,
 " This pleasing error did it never lull 560
 " Thy wishes? has thy constant heart refus'd
 " The silken fetters of delicious ease?
 " Or when divine Euphrosyne appear'd
 " Within this dwelling, did not thy desires
 " Hang far below the measure of thy fate 365
 " Which I reveal'd before thee? and thy eyes
 " Impatient of my counsels turn away
 " To drink the soft effusion of her smiles?
 " Know then for this the Everlasting Sire
 " Deprives thee of her presence, and instead, 570
 " O wife and still benevolent! ordains
 " This horrid visage hither to pursue
 " My steps, that so thy nature may discern
 " Its real good, and what alone can save
 " Thy feeble spirit in this hour of ill 375
 " From folly and despair. O yet lov'd!
 " Let not this headlong terror quite o'erwhelm
 " Thy scatter'd pow'rs, nor fatal deem the rage
 " Of this tormentor, nor his proud assault,
 " While I am here to vindicate thy toil, 380

- " Above the gen'rous question of thy arm.
 " Brave by thy fears, and in thy weakness strong,
 " This hour he triumphs ; but confront his might
 " And dare him to the combat, then, with ease
 " Disarm'd and quell'd, his fierceness he resigns 585
 " To bondage and to scorn ; while thus enur'd,
 " By watchful danger, by unceasing toil,
 " Th' immortal mind superior to his fate,
 " Amid the outrage of external things
 " Firm as the solid base of this great world, 590
 " Rests on his own foundations. Blow ye Winds !
 " Ye Waves ! ye Thunders ! roll your tempest on,
 " Shake ye old Pillars of the marble sky !
 " Till all its orbs and all its worlds of fire
 " Be loosen'd from their seats ; yet still serene 595
 " Th' unconquer'd mind looks down upon the wreck,
 " And ever stronger as the storms advance
 " Firm thro' the closing ruin holds his way
 " Where Nature calls him, to the destin'd goal."
 " So spake the goddess, while thro' all her frame
 " Celestial raptures flow'd, in ev'ry word, 600
 " In ev'ry motion, kindling warmth divine
 " To seize who listen'd. Vebement and swift
 " As lightning fires th' aromatick shade
 " In Ethiopian fields the stripling felt 605
 " Her inspiration catch his fervid soul,
 " And starting from his languor thus exclaim'd :
 " Then let the trial come ! and witness thou

- “ If terror be upon me, if I shrink
“ To meet the storm, or falter in my strength 610
“ When hardest it besets me. Do not think
“ That I am fearful and infirm of soul,
“ As late thy eyes beheld, for thou hast chang’d
“ My nature ; thy commanding voice has wak’d
“ My languid pow’rs to bear me boldly on 615
“ Where’er the will divine my path ordains
“ Thro’ toil or peril ; only do not thou
“ Forsake me : O ! be thou for ever near,
“ That I may listen to thy sacred voice,
“ And guide by thy decrees my constant feet. 620
“ But say, for ever are my eyes herest ?
“ Say, shall the fair Euphrosyne not once
“ Appear again to charm me ? Thou in heav’n,
“ O thou Eternal Arbiter of things !
“ Be thy great bidding done ; for who am I 625
“ To question thy appointment ? Let the frowns
“ Of this avenger ev’ry morn o’ercast
“ The cheerful dawn, and ev’ry ev’ning damp
“ With double night my dwelling ; I will learn
“ To hail them both, and unrepining bear 630
“ His hateful presence ; but permit my tongue
“ One glad request, and if my deeds may find
“ Thy awful eye propitious, O restore
“ The rosy-featur’d maid again to cheer
“ This lonely seat, and bless me with her smiles !” 635
“ He spoke ; when instant thro’ the sable glooms

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" With which that furious presence had involv'd
 " The ambient air, a flood of radiance came
 " Swift as the lightning flash ; the melting clouds
 " Flew divers, and amid the blue serene 640
 " Euphrosyne appear'd. With sprightly step
 " The nymph alighted on th' irriguous lawn,
 " And to her wond'ring audience thus began :
 " Lo ! I am here to answer to your vows,
 " And be the meeting fortunate ! I come 645
 " With joyful tidings ; we shall part no more.—
 " Hark how the gentle Echo from her cell
 " Talks thro' the cliffs, and murr'ring o'er the stream
 " Repeats the accents, We shall part no more !
 " O my delightful friends ! well-pleas'd on high 650
 " The Father has beheld you while the night
 " Of that stern foe with bitter trial prov'd
 " Your equal doings ; then for ever spake
 " The high decree, that thou, celestial Maid !
 " Howe'er that grisly phantom on thy steps 655
 " May sometimes dare intrude, yet never more
 " Shalt thou descending to th' abode of man
 " Alone endure the rancour of his arm,
 " Or leave thy lov'd Euphrosyne behind."
 " She ended, and the whole romantic scene 660
 " Immediate vanish'd ; rocks, and woods, and rills,
 " The mantling tent, and each mysterious form
 " Flew like the pictures of a morning dream
 " When sunshine fills the bed. A while I stood

" Perplex'd and giddy, till the radiant pow'r 665

" Who had the visionary landscape rise,

" As up to him I turn'd with gentlest looks,

" Preventing my inquiry thus began :

" There let thy soul acknowledge its complaint

" How blind, how impious ! there behold the ways

" Of Heav'n's eternal destiny to man 671

" For ever just, benevolent, and wise,

" That Virtue's awful steps, howe'er pursu'd

" By vexing Fortune and intrusive Pain,

" Should never be divided from her chaste, 675

" Her fair, attendant Pleasure. Need I urge

" Thy tardy thought thro' all the various round

" Of this existence, that thy soft'ning soul

" At length may learn what energy the hand

" Of Virtue mingles in the bitter tide 680

" Of Passion swelling with distress and pain,

" To mitigate the sharp with gracious drops

" Of cordial pleasure ? Ask the faithful youth

" Why the cold urn of her whom long he lov'd

" So often fills his arms, so often draws 685

" His lonely footsteps at the silent hour

" To pay the mournful tribute of his tears ?

" O ! he will tell thee that the wealth of worlds

" Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego

" That sacred hour when, stealing from the noise 690

" Of care and envy, sweet rememb'rance soothes

" With Virtue's kindest looks his aching breast,

- " And turns his tears to rapture.—Ask the crowd
 " Which flies impatient from the village walk
 " To climb the neighb'ring cliffs when far below 695
 " The cruel winds have hurl'd upon the coast
 " Some helpless bark, while sacred Pity melts
 " The gen'ral eye, or Terror's icy hand
 " Smites their distorted limbs and horrent hair,
 " While ev'ry mother closer to her breast 700
 " Catches her child, and pointing where the waves
 " Foam thro' the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud
 " As one poor wretch that spreads his piteous arms
 " For succour swallow'd by the roaring surge,
 " As now another dash'd against the rock 705
 " Drops lifeless down! O! deem'st thou indeed
 " No kind endearment here by Nature giv'n
 " To mutual terror and Compassion's tears?
 " No sweetly melting softness which attracts,
 " O'er all that edge of pain, the social pow'rs 710
 " To this their proper action and their end?
 " Ask thy own heart when at the midnight hour
 " Slow thro' that studious gloom thy pausing eye,
 " Led by the glimm'ring taper, moves around
 " The sacred volumes of the dead, the songs 715
 " Of Grecian bards, and records writ by Fame
 " For Grecian heroes, where the present pow'r
 " Of heav'n and earth surveys th' immortal page,
 " Ev'n as a father blessing while he reads
 " The praises of his son, if then thy soul, 720

“ Spurning the yoke of these inglorious days,
“ Mix in their deeds and kindle with their flame ?
“ Say, when the prospect blackens on thy view,
“ When rooted from the base heroic states
“ Mourn in the dust, and tremble at the frown 725
“ Of curst Ambition ; when the pious band
“ Of youths who fought for freedom, and their fires,
“ Lie side by side in gore ; when ruffian Pride
“ Usurps the throne of Justice, turns the pomp
“ Of public pow’r, the majesty of rule, 730
“ The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,
“ To slavish empty pageants, to adorn
“ A tyrant’s walk, and glitter in the eyes
“ Of such as bow the knee ; when honour’d urns
“ Of patriots and of chiefs, the awful bust 735
“ And story’d arch, to glut the coward rage
“ Of regal envy strew the public way
“ With hallow’d ruins ; when the Muses’ haunt,
“ The marble Porch, where Wisdom went to talk
“ With Socrates or Tully, hears no more 740
“ Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks,
“ Or female Superstition’s midnight pray’r ;
“ When ruthless Rapine from the hand of Time
“ Tears the destroying fithe, with surer blow
“ To sweep the works of glory from their base, 745
“ ’Till Desolation o’er the grass-grown street
“ Expands his raven wings, and up the wall,
“ Where senates once the price of monarchs doom’d

- " Hisses the gliding snake thro' horry weeds
 " That clasp the mould'ring column : thus desec'd,
 " Thus widely mournful when the prospect thrills 751
 " Thy beating bosom, when the patriot's tear
 " Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
 " In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove
 " To fire the impious wreath on Philip's brow, 755
 " Or dash Octavius from the trophy'd car,
 " Say, does thy secret soul repine to taste
 " The big distress ? or wouldst thou then exchange
 " Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot
 " Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd 760
 " Of mute Barbarians bending to his nod,
 " And bears aloft his gold-invested front,
 " And says within himself, " I am a king,
 " And wherefore should the clam'rous voice of Woe
 " Intrude upon mine ear ?"—The baleful dregs 765
 " Of these late ages, this inglorious draught
 " Of servitude and folly, have not yet,
 " Blest be th' Eternal Ruler of the world !
 " Desil'd to such a depth of fordid shame
 " The native honours of the human soul,
 " Nor so effac'd the image of its Sire." 771

Ver. 755. *Philip.*] The Macedonian.

THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

PLEASURE in observing the tempers and manners of men, even where vicious or absurd. The origin of vice, from false representations of the fancy producing false opinions concerning good and evil. Inquiry into ridicule. The general sources of ridicule in the minds and characters of men enumerated. Final cause of the sense of ridicule. The resemblance of certain aspects of inanimate things to the sensations and properties of the mind. The operations of the mind in the production of the works of Imagination described. The secondary Pleasure from imitation. The benevolent order of the world illustrated in the arbitrary connexion of these Pleasures with the objects which excite them. The nature and conduct of taste. Concluding with an account of the natural and moral advantages resulting from a sensible and well-formed Imagination.

WHAT wonder therefore since th' endearing ties
Of passion link the universal kind
Of man so close, what wonder if to search
This common nature thro' the various change
Of sex, and age, and fortune, and the frame 5
Of each peculiar, draw the busy mind
With unresisted charms? The spacious west
And all the teeming regions of the south
Hold not a quarry to the curious sight
Of knowledge half so tempting or so fair 10
As man to man; nor only where the smiles
Of love invite, nor only where th' applause
Of cordial honour turns th' attentive eye
On Virtue's graceful deeds; for since the course

Of things external acts in diff'rent ways
 On human apprehensions, as the hand
 Of Nature temper'd to a diff'rent frame
 Peculiar minds, so haply where the pow'rs
 Of fancy neither lessen nor enlarge

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Ver. 18. — *where the pow'rs — Of fancy, &c.*] The influence of the Imagination on the conduct of life is one of the most important points in moral philosophy. It were easy by an induction of facts to prove that the Imagination directs almost all the passions, and mixes with almost every circumstance of action or pleasure. Let any man, even of the coldest head and soberest industry, analyze the idea of what he calls his interest, he will find that it consists chiefly of certain degrees of decency, beauty, and order, variously combined into one system, the idol which he seeks to enjoy by labour, hazard, and self-denial. It is on this account of the last consequence to regulate these images by the standard of Nature and the general good, otherwise the Imagination, by heightening some objects beyond their real excellence and beauty, or by representing others in a more odious or terrible shape than they deserve, may of course engage us in pursuits utterly inconsistent with the moral order of things.

If it be objected that this account of things supposes the passions to be merely accidental, whereas there appears in some a natural and hereditary disposition to certain passions, prior to all circumstances of education or fortune, it may be answered, that though no man is born ambitious or a miser, yet he may inherit from his parents a peculiar temper or complexion of mind which shall render his Imagination more liable to be struck with some particular objects; consequently dispose him to form opinions of good and ill, and entertain passions of a particular turn. Some men, for instance, by the original frame of their minds are more delighted with the vast and magnificent, others, on the contrary, with the elegant and gentle aspects of Nature: and it is very remarkable that the dispo-

The images of things, but paint in all
 Their genuine hues the features which they wore
 In Nature, there opinion will be true
 And action right ; for Action treads the path
 In which Opinion says he follows good
 Or flies from evil ; and Opinion gives
 Report of good or evil as the scene
 Was drawn by Fancy, lovely or deform'd :
 Thus her report can never there be true

sition of the moral powers is always similar to this of the Imagination ; that those who are most inclined to admire prodigious and sublime objects in the physical world are also most inclined to applaud examples of fortitude and heroic virtue in the moral ; while those who are charmed rather with the delicacy and sweetness of colours, and forms, and sounds, never fail, in like manner, to yield the preference to the softer scenes of virtue and the sympathies of a domestic life. And this is sufficient to account for the objection.

Among the ancient philosophers, though we have several hints concerning this influence of the Imagination upon morals among the remains of the Socratic school, yet the Stoics were the first who paid it a due attention. Zeno, their founder, thought it impossible to preserve any tolerable regularity in life without frequently inspecting those pictures or appearances of things which the Imagination offers to the mind. *Diog. Laert.* l. vii. The Meditations of M. Aurelius, and The Discourses of Epictetus, are full of the same sentiment, insomuch that the latter makes the *Χρῆσις οἷα, δὲ Φαντασιῶν*, or “right management of the fancies,” the only thing for which we are accountable to Providence, and without which a man is no other than stupid or frantic. *Arrian.* l. i. c. 12. and l. ii. c. 22. See also *The Characteristicks*, vol. i. from p. 313 to 321. where this stoical doctrine is embellished with all the elegance and graces of Plato.

Where Fancy cheats the intellectual eye
 With glaring colours and distorted lines. 30
 Is there a man who at the sound of death
 Sees ghastly shapes of terror conjur'd up
 And black before him, nought but death-bed groans
 And fearful pray'rs, and plunging from the brink
 Of light and being down the gloomy air 35
 An unknown depth? Alas! in such a mind
 If no bright forms of excellence attend
 The image of his country, nor the pomp
 Of sacred senates, nor the guardian voice
 Of Justice on her throne, nor aught that wakes 40
 The conscious bosom with a patriot's flame,
 Will not Opinion tell him that to die
 Or stand the hazard is a greater ill
 Than to betray his country? and in act
 Will he not chuse to be a wretch and live? 45
 Here vice begins then. From th' enchanting cup
 Which Fancy holds to all, th' unwary thirst
 Of youth oft' swallows a Circean draught
 That sheds a baleful tincture o'er the eye
 Of Reason, till no longer he discerns, 50
 And only guides to err; then revel forth
 A furious band that spurn him from the throne,
 And all is uproar. Thus Ambition grasps
 The empire of the soul; thus pale Revenge
 Unsheaths her murd'rous dagger; and the hands 55
 Of Lust and Rapine with unholy arts

Watch to o'erturn the barrier of the laws
 That keeps them from their prey : thus all the plagues
 The wicked bear, or o'er the trembling scene
 The Tragic Muse discloses, under shapes 60
 Of honour, safety, pleasure, ease, or pomp,
 Stole first into the mind. Yet not by all
 Those lying forms which Fancy in the brain
 Engenders are the kindling Passions driv'n
 To guilty deeds, nor Reason bound in chains, 65
 That Vice alone may lord it : oft' adorn'd
 With solemn pageants Folly mounts the throne,
 And plays her idiot anticks like a queen.
 A thousand garbs she wears, a thousand ways
 She wheels her giddy empire.—Lo ! thus far 70
 With bold adventure to the Mantuan lyre
 I sing of Nature's charms, and touch well-pleas'd
 A stricter note : now haply must my song
 Unbend her serious measure, and reveal
 In lighter strains how Folly's awkward arts 75

Ver. 75. — *how Folly's awkward arts, &c.*] Notwithstanding the general influence of ridicule on private and civil life, as well as on learning and the sciences, it has been almost constantly neglected or misrepresented, by divines especially. The manner of treating these subjects in the science of human nature should be precisely the same as in natural philosophy, from particular facts to investigate the stated order in which they appear, and then apply the general law thus discovered to the explication of other appearances and the improvement of useful arts.

Excite impetuous Laughter's gay rebuke,
The sportive province of the Comic Muse.

See in what crowds the uncouth forms advance !
Each would outstrip the other, each prevent
Our careful search, and offer to your gaze 80
Unask'd the motley features. Wait a while,
My curious friends ! and let us first arrange
In proper order your promisc'ous throng.

Behold the foremost band, of slender thought
And easy faith, whom flatt'ring Fancy soothes 85
With lying spectres, in themselves in view
Illustrious forms of excellence and good,
That scorn the mansion. With exulting hearts
They spread their spurious treasures to the sun,
And bid the world admire ! but chief the glance 90
Of wishful Envy draws their joy-bright eyes,
And lifts with self-applause each lordly brow.
In number boundless as the blooms of spring
Behold their glaring idols, empty shades
By Fancy gilded o'er, and then set up 95
For adoration : some in Learning's garb,
With formal band, and sable-cinctur'd gown,
And rags of mouldy volumes ; some, elate
With martial splendour, steely pikes and swords
Of costly frame, and gay Phœnician robes 100

Ver. 84. *Behold the foremost band, &c.*] The first and most general source of ridicule in the characters of men is vanity or self-applause for some desirable quality or possession which evidently does not belong to those who assume it.

Inwrought with flow'ry gold, assume the port
Of stately Valour : list'ning by his side
There stands a female form ; to her with looks
Of earnest import, pregnant with amaze,
He talks of deadly deeds, of breaches, storms, 105
And sulph'rous mines, and ambush ! then at once
Breaks off, and smiles to see her look so pale,
And asks some wond'ring question of her fears !
Others of graver mien, behold adorn'd
With holy ensigns how sublime they move, 110
And bending oft' their sanctimonious eyes
Take homage of the simple-minded throng ;
Ambassadors of Heav'n ! nor much unlike
Is he whose visage in the lazy mist
That mantles ev'ry feature hides a brood 115
Of politic conceits, of whispers, nods,
And hints deep omen'd with unwieldy schemes,
And dark portents of state ! Ten thousand more
Prodigious habits and tumult'ous tongues
Pour dauntless in and swell the boastful band, 120
Then comes the second order, all who seek
The debt of praise, where watchful Unbelief
Darts thro' the thin pretence her squinting eye
On some retir'd appearance which belies

Ver. 121. *Then comes the second order, &c.*] Ridicule from the same vanity, where though the possession be real, yet no merit can arise from it, because of some particular circumstances which, though obvious to the spectator, are yet overlooked by the ridiculous character.

The boasted virtue, or annuls th' applause 125
 That Justice else would pay. Here side by side
 I see two leaders of the solemn train
 Approaching : one, a female old and grey,
 With eyes demure and wrinkle-furrow'd brow,
 Pale as the cheeks of Death ; yet still she stuns 130
 The sick'ning audience with a nauseous tale ;
 How many youths her myrtle-chains have worn,
 How many virgins at her triumphs pin'd !
 Yet how resolv'd she guards her cautious heart !
 Such is her terror at the risks of love 135
 And man's seducing tongue ! The other seems
 A bearded sage, ungente in his mien,
 And fordid all his habit ; peevish Want
 Grins at his heels, while down the gazing throng
 He stalks, resounding in magnificent praise 140
 The vanity of riches, the contempt
 Of pomp and pow'r. Be prudent in your zeal,
 Ye grave Associates ! let the silent grace
 Of her who blushes at the fond regard
 Her charms inspire more eloquent unfold 145
 The praise of spotless honour : let the man
 Whose eye regards not his illustrious pomp
 And ample store but as indulgent streams
 To cheer the barren soil and spread the fruits
 Of joy, let him by juster measures fix 150
 The price of riches and the end of pow'r.

Another tribe succeeds ; deluded long
 By Fancy's dazzling optics these behold
 The images of some peculiar things
 With brighter hues resplendent, and portray'd 155
 With features nobler far than e'er adorn'd
 Their genuine objects : hence the fever'd heart
 Pants with delirious hope for tinsel charms ;
 Hence oft' obtrusive on the eye of Scorn
 Untimely Zeal her witlefs pride betrays, 160
 And serious Manhood from the tow'ring aim
 Of Wisdom sloops to emulate the boast
 Of childish Toil. Behold yon' mystic form
 Bedeck'd with feathers, insects, weeds, and shells !
 Not with intenser view the Samian sage 165
 Bent his fix'd eye on heav'n's intenser fires,
 When first the order of that radiant scene
 Swell'd his exulting thought, than this surveys
 A muckworm's entrails or a spider's fang.
 Next him a youth with flow'rs and myrtles crown'd
 Attends that virgin form, and blushing kneels, 171
 With fondest gesture and a suppliant's tongue,
 To win her coy regard. Adieu for him
 The dull engagements of the bustling world !
 Adieu the sick impertinence of praise, 175
 And hope and action ! for with her alone

Ver. 152. *Another tribe succeeds, &c.*] Ridicule
 from a notion of excellence in particular objects dis-
 proportioned to their intrinsic value, and inconsistent
 with the order of Nature.

92 PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

By streams and shades to steal these sighing hours
Is all he asks, and all that Fate can give !
Thee too, facetious Momion ! wand'ring here,
Thee, dreaded Cenfor ! oft' have I beheld 180
Bewilder'd unawares : alas ! too long
Flush'd with thy comic triumphs and the spoils
Of fly Derision ! till on ev'ry side
Hurling thy random bolts, offended Truth
Assign'd thee here thy station with the slaves 185
Of Folly. Thy once formidable name
Shall grace her humble records, and be heard
In scoffs and mock'ry bandy'd from the lips
Of all the vengeful brotherhood around,
So oft' the patient victims of thy scorn. 190

But now ye Gay ! to whom indulgent Fate
Of all the Muses' empire hath assign'd
The fields of folly, hither each advance
Your sickles ; here the teeming soil affords
Its richest growth, A fav'rite brood appears, 195
In which the demon with a mother's joy
Views all her charms reflected, all her cares
At full repaid. Ye most illustrious Band !
Who, scorning Reason's tame pedantic rules
And Order's vulgar bondage, never meant 200
For souls sublime as yours, with gen'rous zeal

Ver. 191. *But now ye Gay ! &c.*] Ridicule from a notion of excellence, when the object is absolutely odious or contemptible. This is the highest degree of the ridiculous, as in the affectation of diseases or vices.

Pay Vice the rev'rence Virtue long usurp'd,
 And yield Deformity the fond applause
 Which Beauty wont to claim, forgive my song,
 That for the blushing diffidence of youth 205
 It shuns th' unequal province of your praise.

Thus far triumphant in the pleasing guile
 Of bland Imagination Folly's train
 Have dar'd our search ; but now a dastard kind
 Advance reluctant, and with salt'ring feet 210
 Shrink from the gazer's eye : enfeebled hearts !
 Whom Fancy chills with visionary fears,
 Or bends to servile tameness with conceits
 Of shame, of evil, or of base defect,
 Fantastic and delusive. Here the slave 215
 Who droops abash'd when sullen Pomp surveys
 His humbler habit ; here the trembling wretch,
 Unnerv'd and struck with Terror's icy bolts,
 Spent in weak wailings, drown'd in shameful tears,
 At ev'ry dream of danger ; here, subdu'd 220
 By frontless Laughter and the hardy scorn
 Of old unfeeling Vice, the abject soul
 Who, blushing, half resigns the candid praise
 Of temp'rance and honour, half disowns
 A freeman's hatred of tyrannic pride, 225
 And hears with sickly smiles the venal mouth
 With foulest licence mock the patriot's name.

Ver. 207. *Thus far triumphant, &c.*] Ridicule from
 false shame or groundless fear.

Last of the motley bands on whom the pow'r
 Of gay Derision bends her hostile aim
 Is that where shameful Ignorance presides, 230
 Beneath her fordid banners, lo! they march
 Like blind and lame. Whate'er their doubtful hands
 Attempt, Confusion straight appears behind
 And troubles all the work. Thro' many a maze
 Perplex'd they struggle, changing ev'ry path, 235
 O'erturning ev'ry purpose, then at last
 Sit down dismay'd, and leave th' entangled scene
 For Scorn to sport with. Such then is th' abode
 Of Folly in the mind, and such the shapes
 In which she governs her obsequious train. 240

Thro' ev'ry scene of ridicule in things
 To lead the tenour of my devious lay,
 Thro' ev'ry swift occasion which the hand
 Of Laughter points at when the mirthful sting
 Distends her fallying nerves and chokes her tongue,
 What were it but to count each crystal drop 245
 Which Morning's dewy fingers on the blooms
 Of May distil? Suffice it to have said

Ver. 228. *Last of the, &c.*] Ridicule from the ignorance of such things as our circumstances require us to know.

Ver. 248 — *Suffice it to have said, &c.*] By comparing these general sources of ridicule with each other, and examining the ridiculous in other objects, we may obtain a general definition of it equally applicable to every species. The most important circumstance of this definition is laid down in the lines referred to, but others more minute we shall subjoin here. Aristotle's account of the matter seems both

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Where'er the pow'r of Ridicule displays
Her quaint-ey'd visage some incongruous form, 250

imperfect and false; τὸ γὰρ γελοῖον, says he, ἐστὶν ἀμάξιμα καὶ αἰσχρὸν ἀνώδυνον καὶ ὁ φθαεῖς: "The ridiculous is some certain fault or turpitude without pain, and not destructive to its subject." *Poet* c. 5. For allowing it to be true, as it is not, that the ridiculous is never accompanied with pain, yet we might produce many instances of such a fault or turpitude which cannot with any tolerable propriety be called ridiculous, so that the definition does not distinguish the thing designed. Nay, farther, even when we perceive the turpitude tending to the destruction of its subject, we may still be sensible of a ridiculous appearance till the ruin become imminent, and the keener sensations of pity or terror banish the ludicrous apprehension from our minds; for the sensation of ridicule is not a bare perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas, but a passion or emotion of the mind consequential to that perception; so that the mind may perceive the agreement or disagreement, and yet not feel the ridiculous, because it is engrossed by a more violent emotion. Thus it happens that some men think those objects ridiculous to which others cannot endure to apply the name, because in them they excite a much intenser and more important feeling: and this difference, among other causes, has brought a good deal of confusion into this question.

"That which makes objects ridiculous is some ground of admiration or esteem connected with other more general circumstances comparatively worthless or deformed; or it is some circumstance of turpitude or deformity connected with what is in general excellent or beautiful; the inconsistent properties existing either in the objects themselves, or in the apprehension of the person to whom they relate, belonging always to the same order or class of being, implying sentiment or design, and exciting no acute or vehement emotion of the heart."

Some stubborn diffonance of things combin'd,
Strikes on the quick observer, whether Pomp,

To prove the several parts of this definition: "The appearance of excellence or beauty connected with a general condition comparatively sordid or deformed" is ridiculous: for instance, pompous pretensions of wisdom, joined with ignorance or folly, in the Socrates of Aristophanes, and the ostentations of military glory with cowardice and stupidity, in the Thrafo of Terence.

"The appearance of deformity or turpitude in conjunction with what is in general excellent or venerable" is also ridiculous: for instance, the personal weaknesses of a magistrate appearing in the solemn and public functions of his station.

"The incongruous properties may either exist in the objects themselves, or in the apprehension of the person to whom they relate:" in the last mentioned instance they both exist in the objects; in the instances from Aristophanes and Terence one of them is objective and real, the other only founded in the apprehension of the ridiculous character.

"The inconsistent properties must belong to the same order and class of being." A coxcomb in fine clothes bedaubed by accident in foul weather is a ridiculous object; because his general apprehension of excellence and esteem is referred to the splendour and expence of his dress. A man of sense and merit in the same circumstances is not counted ridiculous, because the general ground of excellence and esteem in him is, both in fact and in his own apprehension, of a very different species.

"Every ridiculous object implies sentiment or design." A column placed by an architect without a capital or base is laughed at; the same column in a ruin causes a very different sensation.

And, lastly, "the occurrence must excite no acute or vehement emotion of the heart," such as terror, pity, or indignation; for in that case, as was observed above, the mind is not at leisure to contemplate the ridiculous.

Or Praise, or Beauty, mix their partial claim,
Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds,
Where foul Deformity, are wont to dwell,

255

Or whether these with violation loath'd
Invade resplendent Pomp's imperious mien,
The charms of Beauty or the boast of Praise.

Ask we for what fair end th' Almighty Sire

Whether any appearance not ridiculous be involved in this description, and whether it comprehend every species and form of the ridiculous, must be determined by repeated applications of it to particular instances.

Ver. 259. *Ask we for what fair end, &c.* Since it is beyond all contradiction evident that we have a natural sense or feeling of the ridiculous, and since so good a reason may be assigned to justify the Supreme Being for bestowing it, one cannot without astonishment reflect on the conduct of those men who imagine it is for the service of true religion to vilify and blacken it without distinction, and endeavour to persuade us that it is never applied but in a bad cause. Ridicule is not concerned with mere speculative truth or falsehood. It is not in abstract propositions or theorems, but in actions and passions, good and evil, beauty and deformity, that we find materials for it; and all these terms are relative, implying approbation or blame. To ask then whether ridicule be a test of truth is, in other words, to ask whether that which is ridiculous can be morally true, can be just and becoming; or whether that which is just and becoming can be ridiculous; a question that does not deserve a serious answer: for it is most evident that, as in a metaphysical proposition offered to the understanding for its assent, the faculty of reason examines the terms of the proposition, and finding one idea which was supposed equal to another to be in fact unequal, of consequence rejects the proposition as a falsehood; so in objects offered to the mind for its esteem or applause the faculty of ridicule finding an incongruity

In mortal bosoms wakes this gay contempt, 269
 These grateful stings of laughter, from disgust
 Educating pleasure? Wherefore but to aid

in the claim urges the mind to reject it with laughter and contempt. When therefore we observe such a claim obtruded upon mankind, and the inconsistent circumstances carefully concealed from the eye of the public, it is our business, if the matter be of importance to society, to drag out those latent circumstances, and by setting them in full view to convince the world how ridiculous the claim is: and thus a double advantage is gained, for we both detect the moral falsehood sooner than in the way of speculative enquiry, and impress the minds of men with a stronger sense of the vanity and error of its authors. And this and no more is meant by the application of ridicule.

But it is said the practice is dangerous, and may be inconsistent with the regard we owe to objects of real dignity and excellence. I answer, the practice fairly managed can never be dangerous: men may be dishonest in obtruding circumstances foreign to the object, and we may be inadvertent in allowing those circumstances to impose upon us; but the sense of ridicule always judges right. The Socrates of Aristophanes is as truly ridiculous a character as ever was drawn:—true; but it is not the character of Socrates, the divine moralist, and father of ancient wisdom. What then? Did the ridicule of the poet hinder the philosopher from detecting and disclaiming those foreign circumstances which he had falsely introduced into his character, and thus rendered the satirical doubly ridiculous in his turn? No; but it nevertheless had an ill influence on the minds of the people. And so has the reasoning of Spinoza made many Atheists: he has founded it indeed on suppositions utterly false; but allow him these and his conclusions are unavoidably true. And if we must reject the use of ridicule, because by the imposition of false circumstances things may be made to seem ridiculous which are not so in themselves, why we ought not in

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The tardy steps of Reason, and at once
 By this prompt impulse urge us to depress
 The giddy aims of Folly ? Tho' the light 265
 Of truth slow dawning on th' inquiring mind
 At length unfolds thro' many a subtle tie
 How these uncouth disorders end at last
 In public evil, yet benignant Heav'n,
 Conscious how dim the dawn of truth appears 270
 To thousands, conscious what a scanty pause
 From labours and from care the wider lot
 Of humble life affords for studious thought
 To scan the maze of Nature, therefore stamp'd
 The glaring scenes with characters of scorn 275
 As broad, as obvious, to the passing clown
 As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.

Such are the various aspects of the mind.—
 Some heav'nly genius whose unclouded thoughts
 Attain that secret harmony which blends 280
 Th' ethereal spirit with its mould of clay,
 O! teach me to reveal the grateful charm
 That searchless Nature o'er the sense of man
 Diffuses, to behold in lifeless things
 The inexpressive semblance of himself, 285
 Of thought and passion ; mark the sable woods

the same manner to reject the use of reason, because
 by proceeding on false principles conclusions will ap-
 pear true which are impossible in nature, let the vehe-
 ment and obstinate declaimers against ridicule deter-
 mine.

V. 285. *The inexpressive semblance, &c.*] This simili-
 tude is the foundation of almost all the ornaments of
 poetic diction.

That shade sublime yon mountain's nodding brow ;
 With what religious awe the solemn scene
 Commands your steps ! as if the rev'rend form
 Of Minos or of Numa should forsake 290
 Th' Elysian seats, and down th' embow'ring glade
 Move to your pausing eye ! Behold th' expanse
 Of yon' gay landscape, where the silver clouds
 Flit o'er the heav'ns before the sprightly breeze ;
 Now their grey cincture skirts the doubtful sun, 295
 Now streams of splendour thro' their op'ning veil
 Effulgent sweep from off the gilded lawn
 Th' aerial shadows on the curling brook,
 And on the shady margin's quiv'ring leaves
 With quickest lustre glancing : while you view 300
 The prospect, say, within your cheerful breast
 Plays not the lively sense of winning Mirth
 With clouds and sunshine checker'd, while the round
 Of social converse to th' inspiring tongue
 Of some gay nymph amid her subject train 305
 Moves all obsequious ? Whence is this effect,
 This kindred pow'r of such discordant things ?
 Or flows their semblance from that mystic tone
 To which the new-born mind's harmonious pow'rs
 At first were strung ? or rather from the links 310
 Which artful Custom twines around her frame ?
 For when the diff'rent images of things
 By Chance comb'n'd have struck th' attentive soul
 With deeper impulse, or connected long
 Have drawn her frequent eye, howe'er distinct 315
 Th' external scenes, yet oft' the ideas gain

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From that conjunction an eternal tie
 And sympathy unbroken. Let the mind
 Recall one partner of the various league,
 Immediate, lo ! the firm confederates rise, 310
 And each his former station straight resumes,
 One movement governs the consenting throng,
 And all at once with rosy pleasure shine,
 Or all are sadden'd with the glooms of care.
 'Twas thus, if ancient Fame the truth unfold, 325
 Two faithful needles from th' informing touch
 Of the same parent-stone together drew
 Its mystic virtue, and at first conspir'd
 With fatal impulse quiv'ring to the pole :
 Then tho' disjoin'd by kingdoms, tho' the main 330
 Roll'd its broad surge betwixt, and diff'rent stars
 Beheld their wakeful motions, yet preserv'd
 The former friendship, and remember'd still
 Th' alliance of their birth : whate'er the line
 Which one possess'd, nor pause nor quiet knew 335
 The sure associate ere with trembling speed
 He found its path, and fix'd unerring there.
 Such is the secret union when we feel
 A song, a flow'r, a name, at once restore
 Those long-connected scenes where first they mov'd

Ver. 326. *Two faithful needles, &c.*] See the elegant
 poem recited by Cardinal Bembo in the character of
 Lucretius. *Strada Pictur. vi. Academ. 2. c. 5.*

Th' attention, backward thro' her mazy walks 341
 Guiding the wanton fancy to her scope,
 To temples, courts, or fields, with all the band
 Of painted forms, of passions and designs
 Attendant, whence if pleasing in itself 345
 The prospect from that sweet accession gains
 Redoubled influence o'er the list'ning mind.

By these mysterious ties the busy pow'r
 Of Mem'ry her ideal train preserves
 Entire, or when they would elude her watch 350
 Reclaims their fleeting footsteps from the waste
 Of dark oblivion ; thus collecting all
 The various forms of being to present
 Before the curious aim of mimic Art
 Their largest choice, like spring's unfolded blooms,
 Exhaling sweetness that the skilful bee 356
 May taste at will from their selected spoils
 To work her dulcet food : for not th' expanse
 Of living lakes in summer's noontide calm
 Reflects the bord'ring shade and sunbright heav'ns
 With fairer semblance, not the sculptur'd gold 361
 More faithful keeps the graver's lively trace,
 Than he whose birth the sister pow'rs of Art
 Propitious view'd, and from his genial star
 Shed influence to the seeds of fancy kind, 365
 Than his attemper'd bosom must preserve

Ver. 348. *By these mysterious ties, &c.*] The act of remembering seems almost wholly to depend on the association of ideas.

The seal of Nature ; there alone unchang'd
 Her form remains ; the balmy walks of May
 There breathe perennial sweets, the trembling chord
 Refounds for ever in th' abstracted ear 370
 Melodious, and the virgin's radiant eye,
 Superior to disease, to grief and time,
 Shines with unabating lustre. Thus at length
 Endow'd with all that Nature can bestow,
 The child of Fancy oft' in silence bends 375
 O'er these mix'd treasures of his pregnant breast
 With conscious pride ; from them he oft' resolves
 To frame he knows not what excelling things,
 And win he knows not what sublime reward
 Of praise and wonder. By degrees the Mind 380
 Feels her young nerves dilate, the plastic pow'rs
 Labour for action, blind emotions heave
 His bosom, and with loveliest frenzy caught
 From earth to heav'n he rolls his daring eye,
 From heav'n to earth. Anon ten thousand shapes 385
 Like spectres trooping to the wizard's call,
 Flit swift before him : from the womb of earth,
 From ocean's bed, they come : th' eternal heav'ns
 Disclose their splendours, and the dark abyfs
 Pours out her births unknown. With fixed gaze 390
 He marks the rising phantoms, now compares
 Their diff'rent forms, now blends them, now divides,
 Enlarges and extenuates by turns ;
 Opposes, ranges in fantastic bands,

And infinitely varies: hither now, 395
 Now thither, fluctuates his inconstant aim,
 With endless choice perplex'd. At length his plan
 Begins to open, lucid order dawns,
 And as from Chaos old the jarring seeds
 Of Nature at the voice divine repair'd 400
 Each to its place, till rosy earth unveil'd
 Her fragrant bosom, and the joyful sun
 Sprung up the blue serene, by swift degrees
 Thus disentangled his entire design
 Emerges. Colours mingle, features join, 405
 And lines converge; the fainter parts retire,
 The fairer eminent in light advance,
 And ev'ry image on its neighbour smiles.
 A while he stands, and with a father's joy
 Contemplates, then with Promethean art 410
 Into its proper vehicle he breathes
 The fair conception, which embody'd thus
 And permanent becomes to eyes or ears
 An object ascertain'd; while thus inform'd
 The various organs of his mimic skill, 415
 The consonance of sounds, the featur'd rock,
 The shadowy picture and impassion'd verse,
 Beyond their proper pow'rs attract the soul
 By that expressive semblance, while in sight

Ver. 411. *Into its proper vehicle, &c.*] This relates to
 the different sorts of corporeal mediums by which the
 ideas of the artists are rendered palpable to the senses,
 as by sounds in music, by lines and shadows in paint-
 ing, by diction in poetry, &c.

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Of Nature's great original we scan 420
 The lively child of Art, while line by line
 And feature after feature we refer
 To that sublime exemplar whence it stole
 Those animating charms. Thus Beauty's palm
 Betwixt them wav'ring hangs, applauding love 425
 Doubts where to chuse, and mortal man aspires
 To tempt creative praise. As when a cloud
 Of gath'ring hail with limpid crusts of ice
 Enclos'd, and obvious to the beaming sun,
 Collects his large effulgence, straight the heav'ns 430
 With equal flames present on either hand
 The radiant visage, Persia stands at gaze
 Appall'd, and on the brink of Ganges doubts
 The snowy-vested seer, in Mithra's name,
 To which the fragrance of the south shall burn, 435
 To which his warbled orisons ascend :
 Such various bliss the well-tun'd heart enjoys
 Favour'd of Heav'n ; while plung'd in fordid cares
 Th' unfeeling vulgar mocks the boon divine,
 And harsh Austerity, from whose rebuke 440
 Young Love and smiling Wonder shrink away,
 Abash'd and chill of heart, with sager frowns
 Condemns the fair enchantment. On my strain
 Perhaps ev'n now some cold fastidious judge
 Casts a disdainful eye, and calls my toil, 445
 And calls the love and beauty which I sing,
 The dream of Folly. Thou, grave Censor ! say,

Is beauty then a dream, because the glooms
 Of dullness hang too heavy on thy sense
 To let her shine upon thee ? So the man 450
 Whose eye ne'er open'd on the light of heav'n
 Might smile with scorn while raptur'd Vision tells
 Of the gay colour'd radiance flushing bright
 O'er all creation. From the wise be far
 Such gross unhallow'd pride ! Nor needs my song 455
 Descend so low, but rather now unfold,
 If human thought could reach or words unfold,
 By what mysterious fabric of the mind
 The deep-felt joys and harmony of sound
 Result from airy motion, and from shape 460
 The lovely phantoms of sublime and fair.
 By what fine ties hath God connected things,
 When present in the mind, which in themselves
 Have no connexion ? Sure the rising sun
 O'er the cerulean convex of the sea 465
 With equal brightness and with equal warmth
 Might roll his fiery orb, nor yet the soul
 Thus feel her frame expanded, and her pow'rs
 Exulting in the splendour she beholds,
 Like a young conqueror moving thro' the pomp 470
 Of some triumphal day. When join'd at eve
 Soft-murm'ring streams and gales of gentlest breath
 Melodious Philomela's wakeful strain
 Attempted, could not man's discerning ear
 Thro' all its tones the sympathy pursue, 475

Nor yet this breath divine of nameless joy
Steal thro' his veins and fan th' awaken'd heart,
Mild as the breeze, yet rapt'rous as the song ?

But were not Nature still endow'd at large
With all which life requires, tho' unadorn'd 480
With such enchantment ? Wherefore then her form
So exquisitely fair ? her breath perfum'd
With such ethereal sweetness ? whence her voice
Inform'd at will to raise or to depress
Th' impassion'd soul ? and whence the robes of light
Which thus invest her with more lovely pomp 486

Than Fancy can describe ? Whence but from thee,
O Source Divine of ever-flowing love !
And thy unmeasur'd goodness ? Not content
With ev'ry food of life to nourish man, 490
By kind illusions of the wond'ring sense
Thou mak'st all Nature beauty to his eye
Or music to his ear : well pleas'd he scans
The goodly prospect, and with inward smiles
Treads the gay verdure of the painted plain, 495
Beholds the azure canopy of heav'n,

And living lamps that over-arch his head
With more than regal splendour ; bends his ears
To the full choir of water, air, and earth ;
Nor heeds the pleasing error of his thought, 500
Nor doubts the painted green or azure arch,
Nor questions more the music's mingling sounds
Than space or motion, or eternal time ;

So sweet he feels their influence to attract
 The fixed soul, to brighten the dull glooms 505
 Of care, and make the destin'd road of life
 Delightful to his feet. So fables tell
 Th' advent'rous hero bound on hard exploits
 Beholds with glad surprise, by secret spells
 Of some kind sage the patron of his toils, 510
 A visionary paradise disclos'd
 Amid the dubious wild; with streams, and shades,
 And airy songs, th' enchanted landscape smiles,
 Cheers his long labours, and renews his frame.

What then is taste, but these internal pow'rs 515
 Active, and strong, and feelingly alive
 To each fine impulse? a discerning sense
 Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust
 From things deform'd, or disarrang'd, or gross
 In species? This nor gems, nor stores of gold, 520
 Nor purple state, nor culture, can bestow,
 But God alone, when first his active hand
 Imprints the secret bias of the soul.
 He, mighty Parent! wise and just in all,
 Free as the vital breeze or light of heav'n, 525
 Reveals the charms of Nature. Ask the swain
 Who journeys homeward from a summer day's
 Long labour, why forgetful of his toils
 And due repose he loiters to behold
 The sunshine gleaming as thro' amber clouds 530
 O'er all the western sky? Full soon, I ween,

His rude expression and untutor'd airs
 Beyond the pow'r of language will unfold
 The form of Beauty smiling at his heart,
 How lovely, how commanding! But tho' Heav'n 535
 In ev'ry breast hath sown these early seeds
 Of love and admiration, yet in vain
 Without fair culture's kind parental aid,
 Without enliv'ning suns and genial show'rs,
 And shelter from the blast, in vain we hope 540
 The tender plant should rear its blooming head,
 Or yield the harvest promis'd in its spring.
 Nor yet will ev'ry soil with equal stores
 Repay the tiller's labour, or attend
 His will obsequious, whether to produce 545
 The olive or the laurel. Diff'rent minds
 Incline to diff'rent objects; one pursues
 The vast alone, the wonderful, the wild;
 Another fights for harmony, and grace,
 And gentlest beauty. Hence when lightning fires 550
 The arch of heav'n, and thunders rock the ground,
 When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,
 And ocean groaning from his lowest bed
 Heaves his tempest'ous billows to the sky,
 Amid the mighty uproar while below 555
 The nations tremble, Shakspeare looks abroad
 From some high cliff superior, and enjoys

Ver. 547. — *one pursues — The vast alone, &c*] See
 the note to ver. 18. of this book.

The elemental war ; but Waller longs
 All on the margin of some flow'ry stream
 To spread his careless limbs amid the cool 560
 Of plantain shades, and to the list'ning deer
 The tale of flighted vows and love's disdain
 Resound soft-warbling all the livelong day :
 Consenting Zephyr sighs, the weeping rill
 Joins in his plaint melodious, mute the groves, 565
 And hill and dale with all their echoes mourn.
 Such and so various are the tastes of men !

Oh blest of Heav'n ! whom not the languid songs
 Of Luxury the Siren, not the bribes
 Of fordid Wealth, nor all the gaudy spoils 570
 Of pageant Honour, can seduce to leave
 Those ever-blooming sweets which from the store
 Of Nature fair Imagination culls
 To charm th' enliven'd soul ! What tho' not all
 Of mortal offspring can attain the heights 575
 Of envy'd life, tho' only few possess
 Patrician treasures or imperial state ?

Ver. 558 *Waller longs, &c.*]

“ Oh ! how I long my careless limbs to lay
 “ Under the plantain shade, and all the day
 “ With am'rous airs my fancy entertain,” &c.
Waller. Battle of the Summer Islands, Canto I.

And again,

“ While in the Park I sing, the list'ning deer
 “ Attend my passion and forget to fear,” &c.
At Penzhu fl.

Yet Nature's care, to all her children just,
 With richer treasures and an ampler state
 Endows at large whatever happy man 580
 Will deign to use them. His the city's pomp,
 The rural honours his : whate'er adorns
 The princely dome, the column and the arch,
 The breathing marbles and the sculptur'd gold,
 Beyond the proud possessor's narrow claim, 585
 His tuneful breast enjoys. For him the Spring
 Distils her dews, and from the silken gem
 Its lucid leaves unfolds ; for him the hand
 Of Autumn tinges ev'ry fertile branch
 With blooming gold and blushes like the Morn. 590
 Each passing Hour sheds tribute from her wings,
 And still new beauties meet his lonely walk,
 And loves unselt attract him. Not a breeze

Ver. 593. — *Not a breeze, &c.*] That this account may not appear rather poetically extravagant than just in philosophy, it may be proper to produce the sentiment of one of the greatest, wisest, and best of men on this head ; one so little to be suspected of partiality in the case, that he reckons it among those favours for which he was especially thankful to the gods, that they had not suffered him to make any great proficiency in the arts of eloquence and poetry, lest by that means he should have been diverted from pursuits of more importance to his high station. Speaking of the beauty of universal Nature, he observes, that "there is a pleasing and graceful aspect in every object we perceive," when once we consider its connexion with that general order. He instances in many things which at first sight would be thought rather deformities, and then adds, "that a man who

Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes
 The setting sun's effulgence, not a strain 595
 From all the tenants of the warbling shade
 Ascends, but whence his bosom can partake
 Fresh pleasure unprov'd : nor thence partakes
 Fresh pleasure only, for th' attentive mind
 By this harmonious action on her pow'rs 600
 Becomes herself harmonious : wont so oft'
 In outward things to meditate the charm
 Of sacred order, soon she seeks at home
 To find a kindred order, to exert
 Within herself this elegance of love, 605
 This fair inspir'd delight : her temper'd pow'rs
 Refine at length, and ev'ry passion wears
 A chaster, milder, more attractive, mien.
 But if to ampler prospects, if to gaze
 On Nature's form, where negligent of all 610
 These lesser graces she assumes the port
 Of that Eternal Majesty that weigh'd
 The world's foundations : if to these the mind
 Exalts her daring eye, then mightier far
 Will be the change and nobler. Would the forms 615
 Of servile custom cramp her gen'rous pow'rs ?

" enjoys a sensibility of temper, with a just com-
 " prehension of the universal order——will di-
 " scern many amiable things, not credible to every
 " mind, but to those alone who have entered into
 " honourable familiarity with Nature and her
 " works." *M. Ant.* iii. 2.

Would fordid policies, the barb'rous growth
 Of Ignorance and Rapine, bow her down
 To tame pursuits, to indolence and fear ?
 Lo ! she appeals to Nature, to the winds 620
 And rolling waves, the sun's unweary'd course,
 The elements and seasons. All declare
 For what th' Eternal Maker has ordain'd
 The pow'rs of man : we feel within ourselves
 His energy divine : he tells the heart 625
 He meant, he made, us to behold and love
 What he beholds and loves, the gen'ral orb
 Of life and being ; to be great like him,
 Beneficent and active. Thus the men
 Whom Nature's works can charm with God himself
 Hold converse, grow familiar day by day 631
 With his conceptions, act upon his plan,
 And form to his the relish of their souls.

INSCRIPTIONS.

By Dr. AKENSIDE.

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INSCRIPTIONS.

I. FOR A GROTTTO.

TO me, whom in their lays the shepherds call
 Actæa, daughter of the neighb'ring stream,
 This cave belongs. The figtree and the vine
 Which o'er the rocky entrance downward shoot
 Were plac'd by Glycon: he with cowslips pale, 5
 Primrose and purple lychnis, deck'd the green
 Before my threshold, and my shelving walls
 With honeysuckle cover'd. Here at noon
 Lull'd by the murmur of my rising fount
 I slumber: here my clust'ring fruits I tend, 10
 Or from the humid flow'rs at break of day
 Fresh garlands weave, and chase from all my bounds
 Each thing impure or noxious. Enter in,
 O Stranger! undisarm'd; nor bat nor toad
 Here lurks; and if thy breast of blameless thoughts 15
 Approve thee, not unwelcome shalt thou tread
 My quiet mansion, chiefly if thy name
 Wise Pallas and th' immortal Muses own.

II. FOR A STATUE OF CHAUCER AT WOODSTOCK.

SUCH was old Chaucer, such the placid mien
 Of him who first with harmony inform'd
 The language of our fathers. Here he dwelt
 For many a cheerful day. These antient walls
 Have often heard him while his legends blithe 5
 He sang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
 Of homely life, thro' each estate and age
 The fashions and the follies of the world
 With cunning hand portraying. Tho' perchance
 From Blenheim's tow'rs, O Stranger! thou art come 10
 Glowing with Churchill's trophies, yet in vain
 Dost thou applaud them if thy breast be cold
 To him this other hero, who in times
 Dark and untaught began with charming verse
 To tame the rudeness of his native land. 15

III.

WHOE'ER thou art whose path in summer lies
 Thro' yonder village, turn thee where the grove
 Of branching oaks a rural palace old
 Imbosoms; there dwells Albert, gen'rous lord
 Of all the harvest round! and onward thence 5
 A low plain chapel fronts the morning light

Fast by a silent rivulet. Humbly walk,
 O Stranger ! o'er the consecrated ground,
 And on that verdant hillock which thou seest
 Beset with osiers let thy pious hand 10
 Sprinkle fresh water from the brook, and strew
 Sweet-smelling flow'rs, for there doth Edmund rest,
 The learned shepherd, for each rural art
 Fam'd, and for songs harmonious, and the woes
 Of ill-requited love. The faithless pride 15
 Of fair Matilda sank him to the grave
 In manhood's prime ; but soon did righteous Heav'n
 With tears, with sharp remorse and pining care,
 Avenge her falsehood ; nor could all the gold
 And nuptial pomp which lur'd her plighted faith 20
 From Edmund to a loftier husband's home
 Relieve her breaking heart, or turn aside
 The stroke of Death. Go, Traveller ! relate
 The mournful story ; haply some fair maid
 May hold it in remembrance, and be taught 25
 That riches cannot pay for truth or love.

IV.

O Youths and Virgins ! O declining Eld !
 O pale Misfortune's slaves ! O ye who dwell
 Unknown with humble Quiet ! ye who wait
 In courts, or fill the golden seat of kings,
 O sons of Sport and Pleasure ! O thou Wretch
 That weep'st for jealous love, or the fore wounds

Of conscious guilt or Death's rapacious hand,
 Which left thee void of hope ! O ye who roam
 In exile ! ye who thro' the embattled field
 Seek bright renown, or who for nobler palms 10
 Contend, the leaders of a publick cause !
 Approach ; behold this Marble ! know ye not
 The features ? hath not oft' his faithful tongue
 Told you the fashion of your own estate,
 The secrets of your bosom ? Here then round 15
 His monument with reverence while ye stand
 Say to each other, " This was Shakespeare's form,
 " Who walk'd in ev'ry path of human life,
 " Felt ev'ry passion, and to all mankind
 " Doth now, will ever, that experience yield 20
 " Which his own genius only could acquire."

V.

EVLIELMVS III. FORTIS, PIVS, LIBERATOR,
 CVM INEVNTE AETATE PATRIAE LABENTI
 ADVISSET SALVS IPSE VNICA; CVM MOX
 ITIDEM REIPVELCAE BRITANNICAE VIN-
 DEX RENUNCIATVSESSET ATQVE STATOR;
 TVM DENIQUE AD ID SE NATVM RECOGNO-
 VIT ET REGEM FACTVM, VT CVRARET NE
 DOMINO IMPOTENTI CEDERENT PAX, FI-
 DES, FORTVNA, GENERIS HVMANI. AVC-
 TORI PVBLICAE FELICITATIS P. G. AMA.

FOR A COLUMN AT RUNNYMEDE.

THOU who the verdant plain dost traverse here
 While Thames among his willows from thy view
 Retires, O Stranger ! stay thee, and the scene
 Around contem. late well. This is the place
 Where England's antient Barons, clad in arms, 5
 And stern with conquest, from their tyrant king
 (Then render'd tame) did challenge and secure
 The Charter of thy freedom. Pass not on
 Till thou hast blest their memory, and paid
 Those thanks which God appointed the reward 10
 Of publick virtue. And if chance thy home
 Salute thee with a father's honour'd name
 Go call thy sons, instruct them what a debt
 They owe their ancestors, and make them swear
 To pay it, by transmitting down entire 15
 Those sacred rights to which themselves were born.

VII. THE WOODNYMPH.

APPROACH in silence ; it is no vulgar tale
 Which I the Dryad of this hoary oak
 Pronounce to mortal ears. The second age
 Now h. st. neth to its period since I rose
 On this fair lawn. The groves of yonder vale 5
 Are all my offspring ; and each nymph who guards
 The copses and the furrow'd fields, beyond

Obeys me. Many changes have I seen
 In human things, and many awful deeds
 Of justice, when the ruling hand of Jove 10
 Against the tyrants of the land, against
 Th' unhallow'd sons of Luxury and Guile,
 Was arm'd for retribution. Thus at length
 Expert in laws divine I know the paths
 Of Wisdom, and erroneous Folly's end 15
 Have oft presag'd; and now well-pleas'd I wait
 Each ev'ning till a noble youth who loves
 My shade a while releas'd from public cares
 Yon' peaceful gate shall enter, and sit down
 Beneath my branches: then his musing mind 20
 I prompt unseen, and place before his view
 Sincereft forms of good, and move his heart
 With the dread bounties of the Sire Supreme
 Of gods and men, with Freedom's generous deeds,
 The lofty voice of Glory, and the faith 25
 Of sacred Friendship. Stranger! I have told
 My function: if within thy bosom dwell
 Aught which may challenge praise, thou wilt not leave
 Unhonour'd my abode, nor shall I hear
 A sparing benediction from thy tongue. 30

VIII.

YE Pow'rs unseen! to whom the bards of Greece
 Erected altars, ye who to the mind
 More lofty views unfold, and prompt the heart
 With more divine emotions, if erewhile

Not quite unpleasing have my votive rites 5
 Of you been deem'd when oft' this lonely seat
 To you I consecrated, then vouchsafe
 Here with your instant energy to crown
 My happy solitude. It is the hour
 When most I love t' invoke you, and have felt 10
 Most frequent your glad ministry divine.
 The air is calm, the sun's unveiled orb
 Shines in the middle heav'n; the harvest round
 Stands quiet, and among the golden sheaves
 The reapers lie reclin'd; the neighb'ring groves 15
 Are mute, nor ev'n a linnet's random strain
 Echoeth amid the silence. Let me feel
 Your influence, ye kind Pow'rs! Aloft in heav'n
 Abide ye? or on those transparent clouds.
 Pass ye from hill to hill? or on the shades 20
 Which yonder elms cast o'er the lake below
 Do you converse retir'd? From what lov'd haunt
 Shall I expect you? Let me once more feel
 Your influence, O ye kind inspiring Pow'rs!
 And I will guard it well; nor shall a thought 25
 Rise in my mind, nor shall a passion move
 Across my bosom, unobserv'd, unstor'd,
 By faithful Memory: and then at some
 More active moment will I call them forth
 Anew, and join them in majestick forms, 30
 And give them utterance in harmonious strains,
 That all mankind shall wonder at your sway.

IX.

ME tho' in life's sequester'd vale
 Th' Almighty Sire ordain'd to dwell,
 Remote from Glory's toilsome ways
 And the great scenes of publick praise,
 Yet let me still with grateful pride
 Remember how my infant frame
 He temper'd with prophetick flame,
 And early musick to my tongue supply'd.

5

'Twas then my future fate he weigh'd,
 "And this be thy concern," he said,
 "At once with Passion's keen alarms,
 "And Beauty's pleasurable charms,
 "And sacred Truth's eternal light,
 "To move the various mind of man,
 "Till under one unblemish'd plan
 "His reason, fancy, and his heart unite."

10

THE END.

